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THE BIBLE STUDY UNION GRADED LESSON SYSTEM
FORMERLY CALLED THE BLAKESLEE GRADED LESSON SYSTEM

THE BIBLE STUDY MANUAL

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS ON

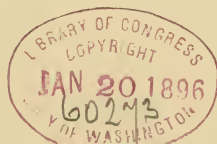
The History of the Apostolic Church

EDITORS

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AND

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PREFACE.

THE MANUAL is designed to stimulate Bible study by exhibiting the facts and truths of the Bible in their historic setting of time, place and circumstance; and by making practical application of these truths to the wants of daily life.

The special purpose of each of the several departments of the MANUAL may be summarized thus:—

THE OUTLOOK presents from time to time matters of general interest in connection with improved methods of Bible study. It is designed to be a report of progress, an assistance to teachers, and a means of communication with those using The Bible Study Union Lessons. Correspondence as to methods used, results achieved, or information wanted will be gladly welcome.

THE EDITORIAL NOTES state the purpose of each lesson and give suggestions as to methods of preparing and teaching it.

THE LIBRARY EXTRACTS supplement the Biblical narrative of the lesson with the best obtainable external information concerning it. These extracts are taken from standard histories, commentaries and other books relating to the times and lives of the apostles, books of travel and exploration in the Holy Land, and geographical and archæological works.

THE PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS notice and briefly enforce some of the more important teachings of the lesson, and are intended to help the teacher in applying its truths to the heart and conscience.

THE ADDITIONAL TOPICS WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES are designed to widen the possible scope of these lessons for those who have time for special investigation of the subjects presented. The references will indicate sources of information on the topics specified and will assist in the preparation of papers upon them.

On disputed questions, Library Extracts or References are often given on both sides of the matter at issue.

The favor with which the MANUAL has been received during the past two years has been very gratifying. A leading pastor using it has declared that it is "indispensable" for teachers. It is almost equally valuable to the older pupils. It includes the cream of many of the best books on the subjects presented. It is in fact a considerable library in itself, and at a cost so slight as to be within the reach of all. It aims to afford all needed external help in picturing vividly the historic background of the lessons, and in making the facts of the Bible seem real; but to do this in such a way that the study of the MANUAL can by no possibility take the place of the study of the lesson in the Bible itself.

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THE BIBLE STUDY MANUAL.

THE OUTLOOK.

STUDYING AND TEACHING HINTS.

I. FOR THE MAIN BODY OF THE SCHOOL.

Approaching the Lesson. Always begin the study of the lesson by a general survey of its contents. Read the Title and the Introductory Note. Look over the titles of the Daily Readings with the Summaries of chapters omitted, if there are any. Examine the Sub-topics and Notes in the Lesson Outline and, in the Progressive grade, the Explanatory Notes in the Appendix, and whatever else may help to give a general idea of the lesson as a whole.

Preliminary Work. Begin with the Review and Preliminary Questions, and fix in mind the connection of the lesson with those which have preceded it. Always keep before you the relation of each lesson to the whole course of lessons to which it belongs.

Written-answers. Then work out the Lesson Outline, question by question, Bible and pencil in hand, according to the Directions for Study in the Quarterly. You will find that the more carefully this is done the better will be the results. Always write all the answers. This will familiarize you with the subjects referred to, and will also encourage your scholars to write out their answers. *Do this yourself, expect them to do it, make much of it when done, and they will do it as a matter of course.* While doing this, jot down in connection with the answers, or on the margin of the Quarterly, the points on which you wish to ask additional questions in class.

Getting a Comprehensive Outline View of the Lesson. As you study each Sub-topic in the Lesson Outline try to get a comprehensive view of it and of its relation to the lesson as a whole. Unite these several views into one general view of the entire lesson, of which these Sub-topics shall be subordinate parts, each in its own proper place. Get, if possible, a clearly defined mental picture of the lesson as a whole, including the

facts presented, their relation to one another and to the lesson, and the relation of the lesson to the general course of which it forms a part. Keep always in mind that what we seek in these lessons is *the framework of the Biblical narrative*, and not its details, — *its principal facts and their connections*, and not particulars, — except in so far as particulars may be necessary to a good understanding of the general outline.

Preparing for the Practical Application of the Lesson. Having finished the Lesson Outline, select from the Lesson Teachings such as you think most suitable for your class. In many cases you will find that your own practical questions, or those which are raised by different members of the class, are much better for your use than any suggested in the Quarterly. It is not possible for the teacher to make use of all the truths that may be suggested by any one of the lessons. As you study jot down those which occur to you, and afterwards select and arrange the more important. It is in this work preëminently that the individuality and power of the teacher appear. Let the teacher make the most of his opportunity. Knowing the circumstances and characteristics of each member of his class he should, as far as possible, provide something for each of them. The historical study in the Lesson Outline gives teacher and scholar a common basis of facts on which to work. The practical use which is made of the material thus gathered will depend on the teacher.

The Use of the Manual. Having finished your independent study of the lesson, read what is said about it in the MANUAL, noting in connection with the several points raised such thoughts from the MANUAL as you may wish to use in the class. In the personal study of the Bible necessary to answer the written-answer questions and to get a good grasp on the contents of the lesson as a whole, together with the subsidiary information obtained in the MANUAL, you will go into the class abundantly prepared to teach the lesson with pleasure and profit.

Before the class. Begin by such review questions as may be necessary to establish the connection between this lesson and those preceding it. Then introduce the lesson before you by some general questions such as its subject, the contents of its Introductory Note, its sub-topics in the Lesson Outline, and whatever else may be necessary to give the class a clear idea of the character and purpose of the lesson as a whole. It may sometimes be best for the teacher to state these things to the class, or to have it done by some member of the class appointed the week beforehand for that purpose. *The important thing is to present this general view of the lesson before taking it up in detail.* When this is well done the value and relative importance of the details will become apparent, and the

temptation to waste time on comparatively unimportant matters will be largely overcome.

Teaching the Lesson Proper. Having finished this preliminary work take up each topic in the Lesson Outline, going over it rapidly by aid of the written-answer questions. If members of the class disagree in their written-answers, always refer them to the Bible for the facts. If necessary to correct the answers of any, do it by asking some other question, or in some such way as not to mortify or discourage the scholar. Commend whatever is good in the answers; encourage scholars that are backward. If the main purpose of the lesson has been clearly set before the class as above suggested, this written-answer work need not consume much time; but it ought never to be omitted, because it is essential to the historical outline, and because it is the means through which teacher and class come to a common understanding of the facts on which to base the practical applications of the lesson.

The Practical Application. If the suggestions above made have been carried out, there will be ample time left for this most important part of the teacher's work. Be guided in it by your knowledge of the class. It will often be best to follow their leadings, and use such questions as they may suggest. Otherwise select from the material already prepared by yourself, or from the Quarterly, such points as you think most useful, and press them upon the heart and conscience.

The Teacher's Work. The teacher's work is one of the highest importance. The instruction of children and youth in the things of God has not been given to angels but to men. Prepare for your work carefully; do it conscientiously; trust the truth; pray for God's blessing on it; and he will give you success.

2. FOR SPECIAL BIBLE CLASSES.

General Principles. The general principle on which these lessons should be used is the same for Bible classes as already stated for others, that is, *a comprehensive view of the whole lesson should precede any discussion of its practical teachings.* In the younger classes the object of the written-answer questions is two-fold: First, to aid in securing a good outline knowledge of the Scripture statements contained in the lesson; and secondly, to bring these statements clearly before the mind as a common basis of information on which teacher and scholars may join in a discussion of the practical truths which they suggest. It is evident that until this common basis of knowledge is secured any discussion of principles based on it will be very unsatisfactory.

General Statements vs. Written-answers. In Bible classes *whose previous studies have made them thoroughly familiar with the contents of the Bible*, the special ends sought by Written-answer questions in the younger classes may be obtained in another way. It is this. The Sub-topics may be assigned to different persons to be examined carefully at home, and stated briefly in class. In this connection the teacher, or some one appointed for that purpose, should also make a general statement of the design and contents of the whole lesson. *By this means, instead of by asking the Written-answer questions, the principal facts of the lesson will be recalled to mind very quickly, and the class then can proceed at once to a discussion of the Lesson Teachings.* Bible classes that enter heartily into this method of work find it exceedingly interesting and helpful. But to get the full benefit of even this method of study it is extremely desirable that classes using it should carefully study the lesson and write out the answers at home. They will thus get a better grasp on the contents of the lesson than is otherwise possible, and be correspondingly better prepared to enter profitably into the discussion of the lesson teachings.

TRANSLATIONS INTO FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

In beginning another volume of THE BIBLE STUDY MANUAL, it gives us much pleasure to afford our readers visible proof of the progress of the lesson system to which the MANUAL belongs. To those who appreciate the difference between the method of study embodied in The Bible Study Union Lessons and those in common use, it will not seem surprising that our foreign missionaries, who are quick to see the value of anything that can aid them in instructing the heathen concerning the fundamental truths of Christianity, should seize the opportunity given them in these lessons and make use of it in the great work in which they are engaged.

And yet it seems almost incredible that a method of Bible study, which had its birth in the work of a pastor for his young people in a country parish among the hills of Worcester County, in Massachusetts, should within four or five years find its way into all quarters of the globe; and that the lessons prepared in accordance with that method should, in that short space of time, be translated into several missionary languages. This would not have been possible unless the lessons met a real need.

When we consider how straitened for funds our foreign missions of all denominations have been during the past three or four years, and how overburdened with labor the missionaries are, it very greatly emphasizes the value which they put upon this work, that out of their scanty appropriations they should be willing to use a portion for printing these lessons,

and that in their great pressure of labor they should be willing to take the necessary time to prepare them for the press. Letters from missionaries of various denominations lead us to believe that these lessons are, or soon will be, translated into eight or ten foreign languages. We have received specimen copies of the lessons in five different languages, and a mimeograph copy of them in a sixth, facsimiles of a portion from each of which are given below.

In the midst of the very great burden of care and responsibility which has fallen upon the editors of these lessons, and the many difficulties which have been encountered in preparing and publishing them, it gives us profound gratitude to feel that our work is appreciated, not only by such a large number of churches and Sunday-schools in this country, but that it is also proving helpful to our foreign missionaries in their noble work.

One might naturally suppose that the greater need of study which is essential to these lessons would prevent their use in heathen lands; but the publication of these editions proves conclusively that such is not the case, and that wherever there is a real determination to know the contents of the Bible, the additional labor involved in the use of these lessons is most gladly given.

It seems especially appropriate to speak of this subject at the beginning of this course of lessons on The History of the Apostolic Church because we here consider the gift of tongues in the early church, which symbolized the universality of the gospel and its triumph over all barriers of language and nationality.

SPECIMENS OF FOREIGN TRANSLATIONS OF THE BIBLE STUDY UNION LESSONS.

No. 1. TELUGU.

The Child's Quarterly, A Year with Jesus, 51 pages. We have also in the same language a copy of The Life of Christ, Progressive grade, with spaces left for written-answers, 107 pages. Both of these are *published in Madras, India.*

బంగారపు వచనమున్న కథయున్న.

“సభ్యులు దినమున మేలు చేయుట న్యాయము” మత్తయి 12: 12.

కొద్దిళ్ళాచకశక్తిగల పాడుగు కుర్రవాడు. ఒక మధ్యాహ్నము నుడిసుండి వెళ్లుచున్నవారి తాలూకామనుష్యుడు “అయ్యా, రోడ్డు మీద బండితోలుచున్న పాడుగు కుర్రవానిని కలుసుకొంటిరా?”

No. 2. TURKISH LANGUAGE, in GREEK CHARACTERS.

The Life of Christ, Progressive Grade, 207 pages.

Ἀγέτι κεριμέ.

Ἰησοῦς τάχι ἀνλερὲ ἰζεβάπεν Πενίμ ταλιμίμ κεν-
 τιμίν τεγίλ, ἀντζακ πενί ἰρσάλ ἔτενίν τῖρ. Ἐγερ
 πῖρ κιμσέ ἀνὴν ἰρατετινὶ ἰτζρά ἔτμέκ ἰστέρσε, ποῦ
 ταλίμ Ἀλλαχτάν μὴ ὀλτηγνη, βέ γιἀχοτ πέν κεν-
 ἰτιλιγιμτέν μι σὸῤλετιγιμι πιλετζέκ τῖρ; Ἰωάν. ζ'.
 16, 17.

No. 3. ARMENIAN.

The Life of Christ, Progressive Grade, 196 pages and large colored map.

ՔՍԱՆԵԻԵՐՐԱՐԴ ԴԱՍ, ՅՈՒՆԻՍ 10

**Քրիստոսի սյլակերպութիւնը
 և վերադարձն ի Կափառնայոյում:
 Մատ. ԺԷ., ԺԸ., Մար. Թ. 1-49, Լուկ. Թ. 28-50.**

No. 4. TURKISH LANGUAGE, in ARMENIAN CHARACTERS.

The Life of Christ, Progressive Grade, 206 pages.

ՍԵՔԻՁԻՆՃԻ ԴԸՍՄ

**ԻԼԵՄԼԵՐ ՀԱՅԹԱՍԸ. Յիսուսըն սօն տէֆ'ա օլարադ-
 Նորուսաղէմէ եէթիշմէսինտէն Գըյամէնա գա-
 տար տըր քի, Միլատըն 30ընճը սէնէսինին Ապ-
 րիլ 2 Կիրակի կիւնիւնտէն Ապրիլ 9 Կիրակի կիւ-
 նիւնէ գատար կիտէր:**

REMARK.—Nos. 2, 3, and 4, above, are published by the missionaries of the American Board in Constantinople, Turkey. Mr. W. W. Peet, Treasurer, writes that they are now preparing the lessons on THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH for use in 1895, copies of which he will send in due time.

No. 5. JAPANESE.

The Child's Quarterly, A Year with Jesus, 116 pages; with a full set of Sewing Cards (see next page).

汝等が前の日曜日御書うきなさいましたかの字のしるしの何のためにかいたのでありますか、イエスの井戸の側そばでどんな事を御話しなさ

イエス第一の説教

路加四〇十六—三十一

○第八課

No. 6. SPANISH.

The Life of Christ, Progressive grade, 116 pages. *Mimeographed in San Sebastian, Spain, for the school there.*

Oración 20.

*1. ¿Qué dijo Herodes el tetrarca de Jesús cuando
vio de sus obras maravillosas? Mar. 6:14.
2. ¿Qué dijeron otros de él? (Mar. 6:15)*

No. 8. THE GOLDEN RULE IN JAPANESE.

Fac-simile of Sewing Card No. 14, in Children's Course, A Year with Jesus (see preceding page). Printed in Japan.

第十四課

金訓 きん くん

己おのれ人ひとに施ほれんとする事ことハ亦また人ひとにも

其その如ごとくせよ

よせ	れあ	れあ	よせ
祈	觀	良	愛
訓	金	善	相

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS

ON

THE OUTLINE HISTORICAL COURSE:

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 1.—INTRODUCTORY. The Disciples Tarrying in Jerusalem for the Promised Power of the Holy Spirit.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 1. **The Importance of this Course of Study.** (1) Notice at the outset, and impress on your class, the importance of the course of study beginning with this lesson. Remember that it continues the history of the work begun by our Lord and by him committed to his church; that it covers the record of the work of the church during the first Christian century; and that it covers the last inspired record of God's dealings with men. This portion of Scripture contains, therefore, God's last words to us; and on our use of the revelation thus made complete depends our Christian life.

(2) As contrasted with the course on the Gospel History, this course shows the results of our Lord's work on earth; as contrasted with the course on Old Testament History, it shows the outcome of the long period of preparation by which the world was made ready for its King and Saviour. Furthermore, in its presentation of the life and teachings of the apostles, this history brings before us not only the brightest examples of self-sacrificing service for Christ, but also all the great truths which lie at the basis of Christianity. And in example and truth are found the most powerful influences over life. The faithful study of this portion of Scripture, therefore, cannot fail to be exceedingly helpful as well as profoundly interesting. Indeed, aside from the study of the life and words of our Lord himself, there is no other subject more worthy of our attention.

§ 2. **Preliminary.** Before beginning the study of the lesson, examine the Quarterly with the class and acquaint them with its contents and arrangement, so that they can use it to the best advantage. (1) Call attention to the Introduction, especially to the Abstract of Lessons in the Course and to the Directions for Study, and emphasize the importance of carefully examining both of these, in order to understand the purpose and method of the lessons.

(2) In examining the lessons proper, notice the different parts into which each lesson is divided, whether in the Junior, Intermediate or Progressive grades, together with the purpose of each part and the best way to study and teach it, as stated either in the lessons themselves, or in the Directions for Study in the Introduction.

Notice also that the written-answer method is followed in connection with the main part of the lesson only, the reason for this being that the principal object of this part of the lesson is to get a clear and accurate knowledge of the Scripture facts, and ordinarily this end can be secured by the written-answer method better than in any other way.

(3) In turning to the Appendix, call attention to the Abbreviations used, the Books Recommended, the Explanatory Remarks and Notes, and the Bible Dictionary, so far as these appear in the grade that you use, making such explanation as may be necessary regarding each. This general survey of the Quarterlies should be made, if possible, when the Quarterlies are given out, on the Sunday before they are used in class.

§ 3. Design of the Lesson. (1) To introduce the study of the course by a brief notice of the authorship, object, and contents of the book of the Acts which is the main source for the history of the apostolic age; (2) to notice more fully the circumstances of the ascension of our Lord, which event was the connecting link between this history and the gospel history of his life; (3) to observe the occurrences of the ten days that immediately followed the ascension; and (4) to make practical application of some of the great truths contained in this portion of Scripture.

§ 4. Preparing and Teaching the Lesson. (1) See The Outlook in this number of the MANUAL for some general suggestions on this subject. Apply the directions there given to this lesson, and notice the result.

(2) Examine carefully the Introduction to the Quarterly, which will give you much information regarding the principles underlying this general *system* of lessons, and also regarding the purpose and scope of this particular course. A thoughtful reading of the Abstract of Lessons in the Course will give a grasp on the nature and relations of the subjects treated in it, which can be obtained in no other way.

(3) Divide the time occupied by the lesson in class into four parts; one for the general preliminary survey of the lesson, one for the Preliminary Questions in the Quarterly, one for the Lesson Outline, and one for the Lesson Teachings, or in the Junior grade, for the Bible Practice Questions, *giving to each part such a proportion of the time as its relative importance demands.* Do this, not in order to make an iron-clad rule which must be followed at all hazards, but as a guide in your work; so that you may not spend so much time on some parts of the lesson as to be unable to teach the other parts.

(4) Note down any practical questions that the class may suggest while going over the Lesson Outline, and bring them up in connection with the Lesson Teachings.

(5) In conclusion, keep in mind what is said in § 1, above, regarding the importance of this course of lessons, and try to use the lesson in such a way as to make it a fit introduction to so great a subject.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

INTRODUCTORY.

§ 5. **The Author of the Book of the Acts.** That the author of the Book of Acts is the same as that of the third Gospel is evident from several considerations: from the address to Theophilus, and the reference to a previous treatise similarly addressed . . . ; from the strong resemblance in the style of the two books; from parallelisms particularly noticeable in the description of the shipwreck in Acts and the storm on the Sea of Galilee in the Gospel; from intimations, slight, and yet noticeable, of the author's knowledge of disease and his use of medical terms . . . ; and from the fact that Luke, who describes himself as the traveling companion of Paul even to Rome itself, is several times referred to by Paul as being with him in Rome. . . . That the author of both is Luke is the universal testimony of antiquity. . . .

There is abundant reason in the structure of the book itself for rejecting the notion that it is the work of more than one author. Its style is the same throughout, except where it professes to report the speeches or writings of others; its narrative is continuous and harmonious; it gives no hint of incorporating foreign material; it fulfills . . . a definite literary and religious design; in brief, it has all the marks of careful and individual authorship, none of a careless compilation. — *Abbott: Commentary, Acts, p. 13a.*

§ 6. **Date of the Book.** (1) *Indications of an Early Date.* — [The date cannot be fixed with certainty.] The key to its date . . . is most likely to be found in its abrupt ending. Great difficulty has been experienced in accounting for this ending; and although the writer may have felt that having brought his story down to the arrival of Paul in Rome his task was accomplished, it must be admitted that if the book did not leave its author's hands till after the death of Paul, it is unaccountable that he makes no mention of that event. And certainly the simplest reason that we can give for his stopping where he does is that he wrote the book in Rome at the close of Paul's two years' residence [*i. e.*, about A.D. 63 or 64], and that he tells no more because as yet there was no more to tell. — *Dods: Introduction, New Test., p. 72.*

(2) *Indications of a Later Date.* — As the Gospel of Luke already presupposes the destruction of Jerusalem (21: 20-25), the Acts of the Apostles must have been written *after* that event. . . . A more definite approximation is not possible. As, however, the Gospel of John must be considered as the latest of the four, but still belongs to the first century, perhaps to the second last decade of that century . . . , there is sufficient reason to place the third Gospel within the seventh decade, and the time of the composition of the Acts cannot be more definitely ascertained. Yet, as there must have been a suitable interval between it and the Gospel . . . , it may have reached perhaps the close of the seventh decade, or about the year 80. — *Meyer: Commentary, Acts, p. 11.*

§ 7. **Purpose of the Book.** A survey of the contents of the book shows that it does not profess to be a history of the Apostles, as the old title of the book . . . would lead us to expect, or of the Church in a comprehensive sense; but that the material taken from this history is here selected and set forth from a definite point of view. . . . [Its purpose is] to set forth the development of the Church from Jerusalem to Rome, from the metropolis of Judaism to the capital of the world, and therewith the transition of the gospel from the Jews to the Gentiles, carried out under Divine guidance through the guilt of the former. — *Weiss: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 320, 322.*

THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

§ 8. **The Acts a Continuation of the Third Gospel.** The links of Scripture . . . uniting one part to another, and assisting our sense of the continuity of the whole, are worthy of especial notice. . . . [Thus] does the Book of Acts at its opening attach itself to the preceding record; throwing back our thoughts on 'the former treatise of all that Jesus began to do and teach,' and then passing rapidly in review the last circumstances which connect the Apostles with their Lord, as the instruments which he had chosen and prepared for the work which he had yet to do. Thus the history which follows is *linked* to, or . . . *welded* with, the past; and the founding of the Church in the earth is presented as one continuous work, begun by the Lord in person, and perfected by the same Lord through the ministry of men. . . . 'The former treatise' delivered to us, not all that Jesus did and taught, but 'all that Jesus *began* to do and teach, *until* the day when he was taken up.' The following writings appear intended to give us, and do in fact profess to give us, that which Jesus *continued* to do and teach *after* the day in which he was taken up. — *Bernard*: Progress of Doctrine, pp. 80, 81.

§ 9. **The Forty Days.** We are at once presented with the fact that our Lord "shewed Himself alive after His passion" to the apostles, "being seen of them forty days." Not that He was with them continually, or continuously, during that period; but that from time to time He appeared to them. "As He was forty days after His birth before He was presented in the temple in the earthly Jerusalem, and, again, forty days after His baptism before He entered on His ministry, so now He waits forty days after His birth from the grave before He presents Himself in the temple of the heavenly Jerusalem, and enters on His priestly ministry in the true Holy of Holies, where He ever liveth to make intercession for us."

Two purposes of these appearances are very distinctly indicated, and we need not seek for others: first, that by many proofs He might convince the apostles of the verity of His resurrection; and secondly, that He might speak to them of the kingdom of God, and the things pertaining to it, and give them His commandments. — *Williams*: Studies in the Acts, pp. 3, 4.

THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST.

§ 10. **The Leading Expectation in the Minds of the Disciples.** *Let us here notice the naturalness of this query.* . . . The Apostles evidently shared the national aspirations of the Jews at that time. . . . The pious unsophisticated people of Galilee were daily expecting the establishment of the Messianic kingdom; but the kingdom they expected was no spiritual institution, it was simply an earthly scene of material glory, where the Jews would once again be exalted above all surrounding nations, and the hated invader expelled from the fair plains of Israel. . . . This eager expectation dominated every other feeling in the Jewish mind of that period, and was burned into the very secrets of their existence by the tyranny of Roman rule. — *Stokes*: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 25, 26.

§ 11. **"It Is Not for You to Know."** Observe that it [Christ's answer] is fatal to all attempts to foretell the time of Christ's second coming, or even the definite signs of that second coming. . . . [This verse] declares not merely the temporary veiling of information from the eyes of the apostles, but the limit put by the Providence of God on human knowledge. But Christ does not merely declare their ignorance of the time of his own second coming. The *times* are the succession of ages, greater or less in length, over which the history of the church should extend, before the end comes; the *seasons* are the successive phases of

development, through and by means of which it would grow to its development. It is not in man either to know the length of time, or to understand beforehand the *necessary processes of growth*; it is his simply to perform the duty allotted to him, *leaving* the great movement of which he is a part, and to which he contributes, to be unfolded by God. He cannot read the book till God has unrolled it. Observe, too, the march of events, though above human control, is not above all control. The Father hath it in his own power. — *Abbott: Commentary, Acts, p. 30.*

§ 12. **The Naturalness and Necessity of the Ascension.** We have the bare literal statement of the fact of Christ's ascension. Let us now consider this supernatural fact, the Ascension, and meditate upon its necessity, and even naturalness, when taken in connection with the whole earthly existence of Incarnate God. . . . In apostolic teaching . . . the ascension is . . . referred to, hinted at, taken as granted, presupposed, but it is not obtruded nor dwelt upon overmuch. The resurrection of Christ was the great central point of the apostolic testimony; the ascension of Christ was simply a portion of that fundamental doctrine, and a natural deduction from it. If Christ had been raised from the dead and had thus become the firstfruits of the grave, it required but little additional exercise of faith to believe that He had passed into that unseen and immediate presence of Deity where the perfected soul finds its complete satisfaction. In fact, the doctrine of the resurrection apart from the doctrine of the ascension would have been a mutilated fragment, for the natural question would arise, not for one age but for every age, If Jesus of Nazareth has risen from the dead, where is He? Produce your risen Master, and we will believe in Him, would be the triumphant taunt to which Christians would ever be exposed. . . . The whole Christian idea as conceived by them [the apostles] just as necessarily involved the doctrine of the ascension as it did that of the resurrection. — *Stokes: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 43, 44.*

§ 13. **The Lordness of the Spiritual World.** Whither, . . . it may be asked, did our Lord depart when He left this earthly scene? . . . The Book of the Acts of the Apostles . . . simply describes Him as removed from off this earthly ball, and then, a cloud shutting Him out from view, Christ passed into the inner and unseen universe wherein He now dwells. The existence of that inner and unseen universe, asserted clearly enough in Scripture, has of late years been curiously confirmed by scientific speculation. Scripture asserts the existence of an unseen universe, and the ascension implies it. The second coming of our Saviour is never described as a descent from some far-off region. No, it is always spoken of as an Apocalypse, — a drawing back, that is, of a veil which hides an unseen chamber. . . . The unseen world is not at some vast distance, but, as the ascension would seem to imply, close at hand, shut out from us by that thin veil of matter which angelic hands will one day rend for ever. — *Stokes: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 46, 47.*

THE DISCIPLES WAITING FOR THE PROMISED POWER.

§ 14. **The Upper Chamber.** The room may have been the same as that in which the Paschal Supper had been eaten (Mk. 14: 15). . . . So far as we are able to distinguish between the two words, the room of the Paschal Supper was on the first floor, the guest-chamber, used for meals; that in which the disciples now met, on the second floor, or loft, which was used for retirement and prayer. It would seem from Luke 24: 53, that they spent the greater part of each day in the Temple, and met together in the evening. . . . The prayer . . . offered may

be thought of as specially directed to the "promise of the Father." — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 29*b*.

§ 15. **The Ten Days of Prayer.** For ten days this first assembly of the Christian Church remained in almost continuous prayer, and in perfect unison of feeling, calmly expecting the fulfillment of the Lord's many promises respecting the Holy Ghost. Luke's Gospel tells us that "they went to the Temple daily," at the usual hour of prayer. . . . With singleness of expectation and absolute assurance of faith, every heart in perfect oneness with every other, asking, as He had bidden, *in his name*, they quietly awaited the time appointed for the advent of the Comforter. — *Butler*: Bible-Work, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 13, 14.

THE CHOICE OF A NEW APOSTLE.

§ 16. **The Death of Judas.** Matthew does not say that Judas, having hanged himself, *did not* fall to the ground and burst asunder; nor on the contrary, does Luke say that Judas *did not* hang himself before he fell to the ground; and it is obvious that the matter should have been so stated, in order to warrant the charge of inconsistency. We have no certain knowledge as to the mode in which we are to combine the two accounts, so as to connect the act of suicide with what happened to the body. It has been thought not improbable that Judas may have hung himself from the limb of a tree, on the edge of a precipice near the valley of Hinnom, and that, the rope breaking by which he was suspended, he fell to the earth and was dashed to pieces. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 36.

§ 17. **The Use of the Lot.** The resort to the lot for the purpose of reaching a decision, was in conformity to the usage prevailing under the old covenant. . . . But the apostles and the assembly of believers did not proceed to cast lots until they had themselves decided conscientiously in accordance with their personal knowledge, as far as any human decision could avail. It was only the final word—that word which required a previous glance into the heart—which they besought the Lord to pronounce through the lot. They were the more easily disposed to adopt this course, as the Spirit had not yet been poured out upon them; but after that event, the lot was never again employed. When all these circumstances are considered, no abuse of the lot can be justified or even be extenuated by an appeal to the present case. — *Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, pp. 21*b*, 22*a*.

§ 18. **The Choice of Matthias.** It has been asserted by some writers that this whole procedure—the substitution of Matthias as an apostle in place of Judas—was premature and in opposition to the will of God, since Paul had been appointed to take the place of Judas as an apostle, although the call was actually given to him only at a later period. . . . But no valid arguments whatever can be adduced in favor of it [this view]. Not the least indication is given at any time that God had signified his disapprobation of this election; for the circumstance that the labors of Matthias are not afterwards mentioned, as little proves that he was not a genuine and true apostle after the heart of God, as the silence observed with respect to the labors of several of the Twelve would prove that they, too, did not possess the true apostolical character. . . . Paul himself never claimed, on any occasion, that he was one of the Twelve, while, on the contrary, he makes a plain distinction between them and himself in 1 Cor. 15:5. He cannot, indeed, be enumerated among them, since his call constituted him the Apostle of the Gentiles; he is thus obviously contradistinguished from the Apostles of the Jews (*comp.* Gal. 22:9). — *Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, p. 22*a*.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 19. **The Necessity of the Ascension.** Christ's return to the bosom of the Father was necessary in order that he might thence send the Holy Spirit to continue his own work, which was no longer to be restricted to a limited territory and one people, but extended to all places, all times, and all nations (*cf.* Acts 2: 33; Jo. 15: 26, 27; 16: 7, 13, 14; Mt. 28: 20).

§ 20. **The Attractive Power of the Ascended Christ.** Our Lord's declaration, "And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto myself" (Jo. 12: 32), referred primarily to his uplifting on the cross; but having been lifted there by wicked men, he was lifted thence by the Father Almighty to his right hand, that, as the ascended and everliving Christ, he might draw men unto himself in glory.

§ 21. **The Nearness of the Spiritual World.** "A cloud received him"; only a thin cloud, a mist that obscures the vision, not adamantine walls and impregnable doors. Only a "veil" (Heb. 6: 19), the thinnest of all fabrics, stirred by a zephyr or torn by a rude grasp, hangs between us and the exceeding glory. The unseen spiritual universe is everywhere about us.

§ 22. **The Discipline of Waiting.** As the Israelites waited for Moses in the mount, so the disciples waited for this new law written "not in tables of stone, but in tables that are hearts of flesh" (2 Cor. 3: 3; Jer. 31: 33). In the one case the waiting was marred by impatience, in the other it was safeguarded by prayer; in the former case it issued in gross apostasy, in the latter case in a marvelous increase of spiritual life and power.

§ 23. **The Decision of Perplexing Questions.** Look at them in all lights, exercise the judgment God has given, and then prayerfully submit the whole matter to his providential guidance. If things do not turn out as we expect, we can at least comfort ourselves with the assurance that our prayer has been answered according to what God perceived to be our real needs, rather than according to our fancied wants.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE BOOK OF ACTS: *Bleek*, Introduction, New Test., vol. i, pp. 368-370; *Hackett*, Commentary, Acts, Int., § 1; *Alford*, Greek Test., Acts, Prolegomena, § 1; *Dods*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 63, 64; *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Acts of the Apostles." 2. THE SOURCES OF THE ACTS: *Weiss*, Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, p. 323 ff.; *Bleek*, Introduction, New Test., vol. i, pp. 355-364; *Alford*, Greek Test., Acts, Prolegomena, § 2; *Dods*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 64-67; *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Acts of the Apostles." 3. PURPOSE OF THE ACTS: *Weiss*, Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, p. 320 ff.; *Bleek*, Introduction, New Test., vol. i, pp. 349-354; *Dods*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 67-72. 4. HISTORICAL CHARACTER OF THE ACTS: *Bleek*, Introduction, New Test., vol. i, 370-376; *Hackett*, Commentary, Acts, Int., § 3; *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Acts of the Apostles." 5. ACCURACY OF THE WRITER: *Dods*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 73-75. 6. CHRONOLOGY OF THE ACTS: *Hackett*, Commentary, Acts, Int., §§ 6, 7; *Alford*, Greek Test., Acts, Prolegomena, § 6; *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Acts of the Apostles." 7. THE ASCENSION OF CHRIST AND ITS LESSONS: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, ch. 3. 8. THE ELECTION OF A NEW APOSTLE: *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 35, 36; *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, ch. 4.

Lesson 2.—THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. The Power from on High Received, and Multitudes Converted.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 24. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Christ's promise of power from on high was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost in the descent of the Holy Spirit, in the miraculous gifts that accompanied it, and in the conversion of the three thousand.

§ 25. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Follow the methods suggested in *The Outlook* and in § 4, Lesson 1, in this number of the *MANUAL*.

(2) Picture first of all the external features of the scene: the hush of intense expectation in the disciples, like the silence and tension before a gathering storm; the sudden sound from heaven as of a hurricane filling the house; the fire from heaven like flames falling upon each of them.

(3) Note, however, that this heavenly flame came not to destroy, but to impart a spiritual life fuller, richer, and stronger than humanity had yet experienced. In the disciples it wrought at once not only a quickening of all their natural powers, but added new and miraculous powers.

(4) Along with these miraculous endowments came a scarcely less miraculous illumination in respect to truths that before had been only dimly and fragmentarily apprehended, but which all at once stood revealed in their divine significance and unity.

(5) Note how this was evidenced in Peter's address delivered on the spur of the moment. In it the relation of the events just witnessed to ancient prophecy, the mission of Jesus as the Messiah, his resurrection and exaltation at the right hand of God, his connection with the marvelous events then transpiring, the danger of the Jews from the impending Messianic judgment, and the possibility of salvation only through repentance and obedience are announced with a confidence and power not born of mere human reasoning.

(6) Note, furthermore, that while the descent of the Holy Spirit was accompanied by the bestowment of miraculous gifts that were in their nature temporary, the crowning evidence of his presence was manifested in the power that morally transformed multitudes of those who heard the gospel, and in the sense of love and brotherhood immediately shown in those who believed; these manifestations have remained the permanent ideals of church progress and of church life in every subsequent age.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 26. **The "Outpouring" of the Spirit.** As rain rejuvenates the natural world, so the Spirit of God works within man a new life which renders him happy, and which shows itself without as a power over the world. The pouring out of

this Spirit indicates a gift in a fulness and strength which has hitherto not been experienced. Before there were individuals in Israel, especially the prophets, who stood with God through His Spirit in near confidential relations; but this spiritual life in God becomes the future possession of all, without distinction of sex and age, even of those who do not belong to the people of Israel by birth, but as servants through incorporation. — *Delitzsch*: Messianic Prophecies, p. 121.

§ 27. **The Feast of Pentecost.** Fifty days . . . after the Feast of the Passover the Feast of Pentecost was kept. During these 50 days the harvest of corn was being gathered in. It is called . . . “the feast of harvest, the firstfruits of thy labors,” and . . . “the feast of weeks.” The feast lasted a single day, which was a day of holy Convocation . . . ; and the characteristic rite was the new meal offering, *viz.* two loaves of leavened bread made of fine flour of new wheat. Special animal sacrifices were also made . . . and freewill offerings. . . . We have no record of the celebration of this feast in the Old Testament. — *Watson*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 160a.

§ 28. **The Day of the Week on which Pentecost Fell.** The question on what day of the week this Pentecost fell must of course be determined by the mode in which the doubt is solved regarding the day on which the Last Supper was eaten. If it was the legal paschal supper, on the 14th of Nisan, and the Sabbath during which our Lord lay in the grave was the day of the omer, Pentecost must have followed on the Sabbath. But if the Supper was eaten on the 13th, and He was crucified on the 14th, the Sunday of the Resurrection must have been the day of the omer, and Pentecost must have occurred on the first day of the week. — *Clark*: In Smith’s Dict. Bib., Art., “Pentecost,” p. 2433b.

§ 29. **The Birthday of the Church.** The fact that the day of Pentecost is the birthday of the Church, has always been recognized. The latter was founded by or through the work of Jesus Christ, as a Prophet, High Priest, and King, through the calling and installation of the Apostles, and the gathering together of larger numbers of disciples, and through the institution of the Lord’s Supper and Holy Baptism. But after the Head of the Church was enthroned invisibly in heaven, and before the Pentecostal festival arrived, the Church of Jesus resembled the human body, after God had formed it of the dust of the ground, and before the spirit which was from God, was breathed into it; it was only after that influence reached man that he became a living soul. — *Lechler*: In Lange’s Commentary, Acts, p. 53b.

THE DESCENT OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

§ 30. **The Expectation of the Disciples.** The words of Christ respecting the new revelation of God by him, . . . must have been vividly recalled to the minds of the disciples by the celebration of this feast [Pentecost], and, at the same time, their anxious longing must have been more strongly excited for that event, which, according to his promise, was to confirm and glorify the New Dispensation. As all who professed to be the Lord’s disciples . . . were wont to meet daily for mutual edification, so on this solemn day they were assembled in a chamber, which, according to Oriental customs, was specially assigned to devotional exercises. It was the first stated hour of prayer, about nine in the morning, and, according to what we must suppose was then the tone of the disciples’ feelings, we may presume that their prayers turned to the object which filled their souls; that, on the day when the Old Law had been promulgated with such glory, the New also might be glorified by the communication of the promised Spirit. And what their ardent desires and prayers sought for, what their Lord had promised, was granted. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, pp. 8, 9.

§ 31. **The Spirit's Presence Manifested.** "There came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." . . . It was a supernatural moment. The powers of a new life, the forces of a new kingdom, were coming into operation, and, as the result, manifestations that never since have been experienced found place among men. . . . [Pentecost was] the inauguration of the spiritual kingdom of the Messiah, the Lord and Ruler of the material universe; and therefore we ought to expect, or at least not to be surprised, that marvellous phenomena, signs and wonders even of a physical type, should accompany and celebrate the scene. The marvels of the story told in the first of Genesis find a parallel in the marvels told in the second of Acts. The one passage sets forth the foundation of the material universe, the other proclaims the nobler foundations of the spiritual universe.—*Stokes: Acts of the Apostles*, vol. i, pp. 89, 90.

§ 32. **The Gift of Tongues.** (1) *Nature of the Miracle.*—In the . . . description of the events of the day of Pentecost, the meaning which St. Luke intends to convey is very plain in every respect, except that we cannot with certainty gather from it whether the disciples, as well as speaking new languages, also understood what they uttered. It would seem most reasonable to conclude that the Holy Spirit with the one power also bestowed the other, and this may have been so in the case of the disciples at Pentecost, even though it was not so at other times and under other circumstances.—*Lumby: In Cambridge Bible, Acts*, p. 20.

(2) *Symbolism of the Miracle.*—A miracle, too, in this form, may have had a symbolic import, which added to its significancy. It was necessary that even the apostles should be led to entertain more enlarged views respecting the comprehensive design of the new dispensation. This sudden possession of an ability to proclaim the salvation of Christ to all nations (even if we allow that it was not permanent), was adapted to recall their minds powerfully to the last command of the Saviour, and to make them feel that it was their mission to publish his name to the ends of the earth. Such a mode of conveying instruction to them was not more indirect than that employed in the vision of Peter . . . , which was intended to teach the same truth.—*Hackett: Commentary, Acts*, p. 42.

THE ADDRESS OF PETER.

§ 33. **The First Gospel Sermon: Its Relation to the Old Testament.** Peter's address is bold and aggressive, not defensive, but his boldness is tempered with the "meekness of wisdom." And alike in his courage, his gentleness, and his wisdom, we discern the clearest, surest proofs of the power of the Holy Ghost. . . . There is here no direct assault upon Judaism, no reference to its lapse from spiritual truth and life into the barrenness of superstitious form. On the contrary, the Jewish Scriptures furnish his starting-point, his constant resting-place and reference. There is a clear implication running through this sermon (and through all other discourses of the Acts) that the old dispensation was the foundation of the new, the Jewish of the Christian. . . . And now, under the express inspiration of the Holy Ghost, Peter traces (and after him Stephen and Paul) these events which had wrought their wonder to the previous prophecies, and then conclusively shows that Christ himself is the Messiah of these Scriptures. But in the midst and at the close of his reasoning he tells them, with perfect quietness and simplicity of utterance, that *they* have delivered up and crucified this Jesus. . . . While the predictions of judgment are general and spoken to the mass, the promise of salvation is individual and personal, and, like all the promises of the Old Testament and New, it is without limitation or exception.—*Buller: Bible-Work, New Test.*, vol. ii, pp. 20, 21.

§ 34. **The Language of Prophecy, and its Significance.** We can make no greater mistake than to interpret the imagery in the Bible . . . after the methods of thought which prevail in our day. . . . The oriental mind, grasping . . . [the phenomena of nature] with a vivid imagination, wrought them into many forms of glowing imagery to denote whatever was grand or terrific. . . . Such were the sources of imagery which the Hebrew prophets had always been accustomed to employ in predicting the divine judgments upon cities and nations. Look at the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah, which is entitled "The burden of Babylon," and observe in what language the destruction of that city is described. . . . "The stars of heaven and the constellations thereof shall not give their light; the sun shall be darkened in his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine." . . .

Still more striking is the announcement, in the thirty-fourth chapter, of the divine judgments upon the land of Idumea. "All the hosts of heaven shall be dissolved, and the heavens shall be rolled together as a scroll; and all their host shall fall down. . . . For my sword shall be bathed in heaven; behold it shall come down upon Idumea." . . . See how Ezekiel—ch. 32—threatens Pharaoh, king of Egypt, with an overthrow by Babylon. "And when I shall put thee out, I will cover the heaven and make the stars thereof dark; I will cover the sun with a cloud and the moon shall not give her light. . . . The prophet Joel . . . employs similar language, which Peter on the day of pentecost quotes and expressly declares has reference to the events then transpiring. . . . "I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood and fire and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness and the moon into blood before the great and terrible day of the Lord shall come." . . . What is it but the familiar language of prophecy telling us that like as Babylon and Egypt and Idumea, so Jerusalem and the Hebrew nation shall be overthrown? . . . What was all this but the phraseology customarily applied to classes of events which had many times before happened, and which were then about to be repeated.—*Warren: The Parousia*, pp. 91-97.

§ 35. **The Convicting and Converting Power of the Holy Spirit.** [How] can we explain this fact, or how account for this conscience-stricken cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" unless we assume, what the narrative of our text declares, that the Holy Ghost, in all His convincing and converting power, had been poured out from on high?

And surely our own personal experience daily corroborates this view. There may be intellectual conviction and controversial triumph without any spiritual enthusiasm. Sermons may be clever, powerful, convincing, and yet, unless the Spirit's power be sought, . . . no spiritual harvest can be expected. St. Peter's sermon, if viewed from a human standpoint, could no more have been expected to succeed than the Master's. The one element, however, which now entered into the combination, explains the difference. The Spirit was now given, and men therefore hearkened to the servant where they had turned a deaf ear to the Master. . . .

Christianity is a Divine power, a power which must be sought in faith, in humiliation, and in prayer; and till the Holy Ghost be duly honoured, and His presence be humbly sought, the finest system and the most elaborate organizations will be found devoid of any fruitful life and vigour.—*Stokes: Acts of the Apostles*, vol. i, pp. 130-132.

THE CONVERSION OF THE THREE THOUSAND.

§ 36. **Result of the First Day's Preaching.** At the feast of Pentecost, in consequence of the power from above imparted to the apostles and disciples, a

very considerable accession was made to the formerly moderate band of believers in Jerusalem . . . ; about 3000 souls received the word and were joined to the Church by baptism. . . . We must not, however, at once credit the Church in Jerusalem with this increase. For among the listeners to the apostolic discourse there were Israelitish guests and proselytes from near and distant countries . . . , whence we may infer that of those newly converted many were not living in Jerusalem itself, but partly in Judæa and Galilee, partly in countries beyond Palestine, who therefore returned home after the feast days were ended.— *Lechler* : Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, p. 31.

§ 37. **The One Article of Faith.** There was only one article of faith [in the early Church] which constituted the peculiar mark of the Christian profession, and from this point believers were led to a clearer and fuller knowledge of the whole contents of the Christian faith, by the continual enlightening of the Holy Spirit; that article was belief in Jesus as the Messiah. It naturally followed that they ascribed to him the whole idea of what the Messiah, according to a right understanding of the meaning and spirit of the Old Testament promises, was to be, — the Redeemer from sin, the Ruler of the kingdom of God, to whom their whole lives were to be devoted, and whose laws were to be followed in all things. . . . Whoever acknowledged Jesus as the Messiah, received him, consequently, as the infallible, divine prophet, and implicitly submitted to his instructions as communicated by his personal ministry, and afterwards by his inspired organs, the Apostles. Hence baptism at this period, in its peculiar Christian meaning, having reference to this one article of faith which constituted the essence of Christianity, was designated as baptism into Jesus, into the name of Jesus; it was the holy rite which sealed the connexion with Jesus as the Messiah. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, p. 21.

§ 38. **The Conditions of Church Membership.** Observe (1) that these converts were received into the church at once, on their profession of repentance and their consent to receive baptism, without waiting for instruction in Christian doctrine, of which they must have been almost wholly ignorant; (2) that they were received on the basis of personal repentance and acceptance of the word, as converts to the religion of Jesus Christ. . . . (3) It is not impossible that the apostles may have received some who were not savingly converted, for they were not infallible in their spiritual judgments of men. . . . (4) It is, however, clear from the next verse that the majority of these converts were humble and docile recipients of the new faith, as taught by the apostles, and were steadfast in it. — *Abbott* : Commentary, Acts, p. 48a.

FELLOWSHIP AND GROWTH IN THE CHURCH.

§ 39. **External Worship among the Early Believers.** At first it would have seemed natural that the followers of a Teacher whom the priests had condemned to death, who had once nearly been stoned, and once all but seized in the very courts of the Temple . . . , should keep aloof from the sanctuary that had thus been desecrated. But they remembered that He had claimed it as His Father's house, that His zeal for that house had been as a consuming passion . . . , and therefore they had attended its worship daily before the Day of Pentecost . . . ; and it was not less, but infinitely more, precious to them now, as the place where they could meet with God, than it had been in the days of ignorance, before they had known the Christ, and through Him had learnt to know the Father. The apparent strangeness of their being allowed to meet in the Temple is explained partly by the fact that its courts were opened to all Israelites who did not disturb its peace, partly by the existence of a moderate half-believing party in

the Sanhedrin itself, including Nicodemus, Joseph of Arimathæa and Gamaliel . . . ; and by the popularity gained for a time by the holiness and liberal almsgiving of the new community.— *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 56b, 57a.

§ 40. **The Inner Life of the Early Believers.** If we adhere mainly to the Acts, we get the impression that a *holy joy* on the part of the faithful was the keynote of their inner life: the joyful consciousness of salvation, of redemption by Christ who had been crucified and was risen again. The joyous tone of their heart found expression in the prayer of thanksgiving. . . . The feeling of joy sprang from the certainty of being redeemed. . . . Redemption, according to the testimony of the apostles, and the experience of believers themselves, was twofold: firstly, forgiveness of sins, the purging away of guilt, deliverance from divine wrath . . . ; and secondly, the gift of the Holy Ghost . . . , which was given to all who received the word of salvation in faith and obedience. . . . These two favours — forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Spirit — form the chief features of the blessing . . . imparted by God's hand to those who were converted, in fulfilment of the promise of the covenant which was given to the patriarchs . . . , particularly to Abraham.— *Lechler* : Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 37, 38.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 41. **The Fulfillment of History, Prophecy, and Promise.** The descent of the Holy Spirit ushered in a new dispensation toward which God's purpose for the redemption of humanity had been steadily working through the so-called patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations. As such it had been repeatedly foretold by the prophets, and explicitly promised by Christ.

§ 42. **The Holy Spirit in Relation to the Spirit of Man.** In the Old Testament the Spirit of God was conceived of as a power external to man, coming upon only a few individuals, and working on them from without; in the New Testament he is revealed as a divine person sent by Christ to humanity, who, by taking up his abode in the heart, becomes the indwelling Spirit working from the center of man's life outwardly.

§ 43. **The Indwelling Spirit.** The Spirit of God at the center of man's life, renewing, purifying, ennobling all his thoughts and activities, bringing him into fellowship with God and into holy and unselfish relations to his fellow men, — this is God's high and loving purpose respecting man.

§ 44. **The Enlarging of Man through the Spirit.** "Man is a vessel designed to receive God, a vessel which must be enlarged in proportion as it is filled, and filled in proportion as it is enlarged." — *Godel*.

§ 45. **The Fullness and Freeness of the Gospel.** Salvation was offered as freely to those who had slain Christ as to his best friends. "The LORD is good; his mercy endureth for ever" (Ps., 100: 5). He does not wish "that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3: 9).

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.*

1. THE DAY OF PENTECOST: *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, p. 36; *Plumptre*, Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 35, 36; Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Pentecost." 2. THE DESCENT OF THE SPIRIT THE BEGINNING OF A NEW EPOCH IN HISTORY: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 191, 192. 3. THE GIFT OF TONGUES: See Commentaries on Acts, ch. 2; *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 27, 28; *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 10-17; *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 197-203. 4. THE SERMON OF PETER, AND ITS RESULTS: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 204-207; see Commentaries on Acts, ch. 2.

Lesson 3.—THE HEALING OF THE LAME MAN, AND ITS RESULTS. The Beginning of Persecution.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 46. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the first persecution against the church was stirred up in consequence of the healing of the lame man by Peter; how Peter and John were arrested and brought before the highest tribunal of the Jews; and why their judges, though amazed and angered at their boldness, feared to do more than to threaten them and let them go.

§ 47. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Let the teacher refresh his mind concerning the method in which these lessons should be studied and taught, as stated in *The Outlook* and in § 4, Lesson 1, in this MANUAL.

(2) Begin the study of the lesson by showing how the prodigious excitement caused by the events of the day of Pentecost must have demanded a season of repose during which the believers could settle into a calm realization of the significance of those events, and, by the strengthening and clarifying of their faith, become prepared for the coming shock of opposition.

(3) Show that the rulers did not at once begin to persecute the church, because (a) they were themselves amazed and perplexed at the Pentecostal occurrences; (b) they hoped that as the excitement calmed down the results would likewise disappear; (c) the converts conducted themselves as strict Jews; and (d) the Messianic belief which they professed rested after all on a cherished national hope, and the rulers fancied that this outbreak was only one of many similar Messianic disturbances characteristic of the time.

(4) In the healing of the lame man picture the sudden reaction in him from the dull hopelessness of a helpless and impoverished cripple to the joy, the buoyancy, the immeasurable possibilities consequent on the possession of perfect health; the excitement caused by his actions; and the deep impression made by Peter's address.

(5) Show how by this occurrence the eyes of the rulers were opened as to the hold gained by this new religious movement, how they took immediate measures to suppress it, and how having arrested Peter and John they were compelled to let them go after merely warning them against further work in the name of Jesus. The popularity of the apostles is shown in the fact that the rulers dared not proceed further against them for fear of the people.

(6) Note how this beginning of opposition, instead of depressing the hearts of the believers, filled them with confidence, thanksgiving and praise, and led to a fresh baptism of spiritual power.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 48. **Source of the First Persecution of the Church.** It does not appear that the Pharisees, though they had taken the lead in the condemnation of Christ,

were eager, after that event, to persecute his followers. They looked on the illiterate Galileans as worthy of no further attention, especially since they strictly observed the ceremonial law, and at first abstained from controverting the peculiar tenets of their party; they allowed them to remain undisturbed, like some other sects by whom their own interests were not affected. But instead of the Pharisees, the Sadducees came forward as persecutors of the Gospel which was spreading in every direction with unrestrained power. The earnestness and zeal with which the disciples testified of the Risen Saviour, and of the hope of a future Resurrection founded on him, must have rendered them hateful to this sect. . . . The Sadducees were noted for their harshness and inhumanity. Since they could not venture to oppugn directly and openly the doctrines of the Pharisees, they must have welcomed the opportunity of attacking, under another pretext, a sect zealous for those doctrines, and rapidly spreading, and of bringing the authority of the Sanhedrin to bear against them. But what served to render the Christians hateful to the Sadducees, must have contributed to render the Pharisees favorably disposed towards them. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, p. 38.

§ 49. **Peter and John Coworkers for Christ.** They were probably about the same age (the idea that Peter was some years older than John rests mainly on the pictures which artists have drawn from their imagination, and has no evidence in Scripture), and had been friends from their youth upward. They had been partners as fishermen on the Sea of Galilee. They had been sharers in looking for the consolation of Israel, and had together received the baptism of John. John and Andrew had striven which should be the first to tell Peter that they had found the Christ. The two had been sent together to prepare for the Passover. John takes Peter into the palace of the high priest, and though he must have witnessed his denials, is not estranged from him. It is to John that Peter turns for comfort after his fall, and with him he comes to the sepulchre on the morning of the Resurrection. The eager affection which, now more strongly than ever, bound the two together is seen in Peter's question, "Lord, and what shall this man do?" and now they are again sharers in action and in heart, in teaching and in worship. . . . When it was that they parted never to meet again, we have no record. — *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 58.

THE HEALING OF THE LAME MAN AT THE BEAUTIFUL GATE.

§ 50. **Healing in the Name of Jesus.** First concentrating his [Peter's] gaze, with that of John, upon the suppliant, he answers, "Look on us!" They had learned the Master's method, and were now practicing it. *He*, almost always, tarried to question, or to interpose some act which required delay. And his purpose was always the same; to excite or deepen expectation, faith, hope on the part of the helpless needy one. He always helped the *spirit* first; *led* it to *trust*, and then deepened the trust by rewarding it with healing. So the twain disciples stirred the man to *expect* some gift — how much, he knew not.

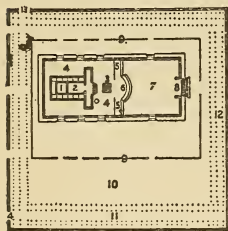
Then followed Peter's response to the man's entreaty: "Rise, walk, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth!" A stupendous, sublime faith in Christ's absolute Deity and Lordship stands out in these bold words! To these disciples he is indeed the living reigning God. His own spirit of mercy toward misery led them thus to invoke his willing might for deliverance of the wretched. . . . Not only in Peter's expression of utter dependence upon the power of Christ, but also by *his act* in taking the man's hand and lifting him up, do we distinguish the disciple's miracle-working from the Master's. Christ spoke, sometimes touched, but *never* used physical strength in connection with any miracle. — *Butler* : Bible-Work, New Test., vol. ii, p. 27b.

§ 51. **The Typical Significance of the First Miracle.** Why was this miracle of healing the cripple at the temple gate the only one recorded of those earliest signs and wonders wrought by apostolic hands? The answer seems to be threefold: this miracle was typical of the Church's future work; it was the occasion of St. Peter's testimony before the Sanhedrin; and it led up to the first persecution which the Jewish authorities raised against the Church. . . .

This miracle was typical of the Church's work, for it was a beggar that was healed, and this beggar lay helpless and hopeless at the very doors of the temple. The beggar typified humanity at large. . . . Humanity, Jew and Gentile alike, lay at the very gate of God's temple of the universe. . . .

This miracle of healing the beggar was typical of the Church's work again, because it was a beggar who thus received a blessing when the Church roused itself to the discharge of its great mission. The first man healed and benefited by St. Peter was a poor man, and the Church's work has ever led her to deal with the poor, and to interest herself most keenly in their well-being. . . . But yet, again, the conversion of this beggar was effected through his healing; and here we see a type of the Church's future work. . . . The Church should count no human interest beyond its sway, and should take the keenest interest and claim a living share in every portion of life's work. . . . Furthermore, . . . this miracle has been divinely recorded because it was the occasion of St. Peter's testimony both to the people and to their rulers. — *Stokes*: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 159-161, 164, 165.

§ 52. **The Beautiful Gate.** There was one gate . . . which was of Corinthian brass, and greatly excelled those that were only covered with silver and gold. . . . Its height was fifty cubits, and its doors were forty cubits; and it was adorned after a most costly manner, as having much richer and thicker plates of silver and gold upon them than the other. . . . There were fifteen steps, which led from the wall of the court of the women to this greater gate: whereas those that led thither from the other gates were five steps shorter. — *Josephus*: Wars, vol. ii, Bk. v, ch. 5, § 3.



Plan of the Temple.

Remark. — The Beautiful Gate is supposed to have been located at the point marked 8 on the accompanying plan of the temple. *Solomon's Porch* was a wide and beautiful covered colonnade of Corinthian columns 37½ feet high, running along the eastern side of the temple area (12 on the plan). It was closed on the side toward the outer wall, and open on the side toward the courts of the temple. It was a place for public gatherings.

PETER'S ADDRESS IN THE TEMPLE.

§ 53. **Peter's Mental Attitude toward his Hearers.** Peter would have spoken in a different strain to obstinate unbelievers. But here he hoped to meet with minds open to conviction. He therefore avoided saying what would only exasperate and repel them. After he had said what tended to convince them of their guilt, he adopted a milder tone, to infuse confidence and encourage the contrite. He brought forward what might be said in extenuation of those who had united in the condemnation of Christ, "that in ignorance they had denied the Messiah," and that as far as they and their rulers had acted in ignorance, it was in consequence of a higher necessity. It was the eternal counsel of God that the Messiah should suffer for the salvation of men, as had been predicted by the prophets. . . .

[In saying this, however,] Peter by no means acquits them of all criminality, as

the connexion of his words with what he had before said plainly shows; for he had brought forward the example of Pilate to point out how great was the criminality of those who, even in their blindness, condemned Jesus. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, pp. 39, 40.

§ 54. **The Coming Again of Christ.** The apostle enforces his exhortation to repent by an appeal to the final coming of Christ, not because he would represent it as near in point of time, but because that event was always *near to the feelings and consciousness* of the first believers. It was the great consummation on which the strongest desires of their souls were fixed, to which their thoughts and hopes were habitually turned. They lived with reference to this event. They laboured to be prepared for it. They were constantly, in the expressive language of Peter, *looking for and* (in their impatience as it were) *hastening the arrival of the day of God* (2 Pet. 3: 12). . . . As we should expect, they hold it up to the people of God to encourage them in affliction, to awaken them to fidelity, zeal, perseverance, and on the other hand appeal to it to warn the wicked, and impress upon them the necessity of preparation for the revelations of the final day. — *Hackett* : Commentary, Acts, p. 63.

§ 55. **Times of Refreshing.** The Greek word signifies “appointed times,” i. e. which God hath appointed and which He keeps in His own power, but which the penitence of man will hasten. They are called “times of refreshing,” i. e. peace and blessedness, for the Apostle describes them afterwards as the coming of the Christ. But by the prophecies which he quotes he shows that the refreshing is for those only who repent (v. 23) and hear the prophet whom God sends. The anticipation of a speedy return of Christ from heaven was common among the first believers. — *Lumby* : In Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 36, 37.

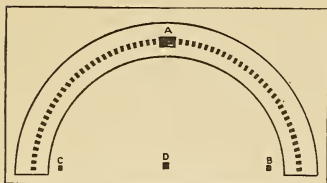
PETER AND JOHN BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

§ 56. **The Sanhedrin.** (1) *Its History.* — There is no evidence to show that, *previous to the Greek period*, there existed at Jerusalem an aristocratic council claiming to exercise either supreme, or what was substantially supreme, authority and jurisdiction over the whole Jewish nation. . . . The first occasion on which it is mentioned, and that under this designation, is in the time of Antiochus the Great (223–187 B.C.). . . .

(2) *Its Composition.* — Till the very last, the head of the sacerdotal aristocracy continued to preside over the Sanhedrim. . . . The number of members amounted to seventy-one, clearly taking as its model the council of elders in the time of Moses. . . . *Sadducees and Pharisees alike* had seats in the Sanhedrim (especially during the Romano-Herodian period). . . . [During this period] the greatest amount of influence was already practically in the hands of the Pharisees, with whose demands the Sadducees were obliged, however reluctantly, to comply. . . .

(3) *Its Jurisdiction.* — As regards the area over which the jurisdiction of the supreme Sanhedrim extended, . . . its *civil* authority was restricted, in the time of Christ, to . . . Judæa proper. . . . It formed, in contrast to the foreign authority of Rome, that *supreme native* court which . . . the Romans had allowed to continue as before, only imposing certain restrictions with regard to competency. . . . The Sanhedrim was, above all, the final court of appeal for questions connected with the Mosaic law, . . . [and] was called upon to intervene in every case in which the lower courts could not agree as to their judgment. . . . As the Roman system of provincial government was not strictly carried out in the case of Judæa, . . . the Sanhedrim was still left in the enjoyment of a comparatively high degree of independence. . . . It was only in cases in which sentence of

death was pronounced that the judgment required to be ratified by the authority of the procurator. . . . The stoning of Stephen . . . [is] to be regarded either as a case of excess of jurisdiction, or as an act of irregular mob-justice. . . .



The Sanhedrin.

A. Presiding officer; the other members being seated in the order of their rank, the first on his right hand, the next on his left hand, and so on. B. C. Scribes; one to record verdicts of guilty, and the other verdicts of acquittal. D. The prisoner.

(4) *Judicial Procedure*.—The members of the court sat in a semicircle . . . in order that they might be able to see each other. . . . In cases involving a capital sentence, . . . it was the practice always to hear the reasons in favour of acquittal in the first place, which being done, those in favour of a conviction might next be stated. . . . For a sentence of acquittal a simple majority was sufficient, while for one of condemnation . . . a majority of two was required.—*Schürer*: The Jewish People in the Time of Christ, 2d Div., vol. i, pp. 165, 166, 174, 178, 179, 184–189, 193, 194.

§ 57. **The Supremacy of Conscience.** “Whether it be right in the sight of God” [judge ye]. The words assert the right of conscience, recognising a divine authority, to resist a human authority which opposes it. In theory, as the appeal “judge ye” showed even then, the right so claimed is of the nature of an axiom. In practice, the difficulty rises in the question, Is there the divine authority which is claimed? And the only practical answer is to be found in the rule, that men who believe they have the authority are bound to act as if they had it. If the Lord God hath spoken to them, they can but prophesy (Amos 3:8). In cases such as this [of the apostles], where the question is one of witness to facts, they must not tamper with the truth, if they believe themselves commissioned by God to declare the facts, for fear of offending men. When they pass from facts to doctrines inferred from facts, from doctrines to opinions, from opinions to conjectures, the duty of not saying that which they do not believe remains the same, but there is not the same obligation to proclaim what they thus hold in various stages of assent. There may be cases in which reticence is right as well as politic.

And even in regard to facts, the publication . . . must not be gratuitous. There must be an adequate authority, or an adequate reason for disobedience to the human authority, which is binding until it is superseded by that which is higher than itself. And the *onus probandi* [burden of proof] rests on the man who asserts the higher authority. Intensity of conviction may be enough for himself, but it cannot be expected that it will be so for others. In the absence of signs and wonders the question must be discussed on the wide ground of Reason and of Conscience, and the man who refuses to enter into debate on that ground because he is certain he is right is *ipso facto* convicted of an almost insane egotism.—*Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, p. 74.

THE THANKSGIVING PRAYER OF THE CHURCH.

§ 58. **The Spirit of the Early Christians.** The pure and holy spirit of Christ breathes in this prayer. It exhibits no trace of revengeful feeling, of carnal zeal, or of a desire for the destruction of any enemies: however zealous these Christians are in the cause of God, all that they presume to ask is, that he would behold the threatenings of their enemies, and graciously enable them to bear

witness in word and in deed, with confidence and joy. Even as Christ did not come to condemn, but to save the world . . . , so, too, the apostles and other believers are controlled, not by the penal, burning zeal of an Elijah, but by deep love for the souls of men, who are to be saved through the instrumentality of their words and acts, and to be conducted to salvation in Christ. . . . The promise is given unconditionally that such prayers shall be heard. The prayer was, accordingly, answered—it was answered immediately, and above all that they had asked or thought. . . . The believers could not have been filled with the Holy Ghost [as they were on this occasion], if they had not previously offered this prayer.—*Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, p. 82a.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 59. **Miracles Not Needed Now.** By its effects on human life and character, Christianity has proved itself to be of God. If men will not be convinced by the accumulated evidences of eighteen hundred years of history, neither would they be persuaded by miracles (*cf.* Lu. 16: 27-31).

§ 60. **The Importance of the Resurrection.** Christianity is not a mere system of morality, for then it would be independent of its Author, and could be adequately expounded from a book. But since Christianity is a spiritual energy that renews and transforms men, its source must be, not a dead Christ, but a Christ who lives, and by his own triumph over physical death demonstrates his power to rescue other men from spiritual death.

§ 61. **No Other Name.** The name of Jesus is the symbol of his living personality and infinite power. What no man can do for himself or for others, what none but Christ can do for any man, may be done for every man by the uplifting, renewing, and keeping power of the exalted and enthroned Christ.

§ 62. **The Sinner's Supreme Need.** Not more instruction, but more power; not a moral philosopher who stands at distance and discourses eloquently of sin and virtue; but a Saviour whose love and sympathy embrace the fallen and helpless, who inspires hope and courage, destroys the power of indwelling sin, girds him with strength, and lifts him into fellowship with God.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE FIRST APOSTOLIC MIRACLE TYPICAL OF THE CHURCH'S FUTURE WORK: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 158-172. 2. THE HOSTILITY OF THE SADDUCEES: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 177-181; *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 71-79. 3. THE EARLY APOSTOLIC PREACHING: *Ibid.*, pp. 266-284. 4. "SEASONS OF REFRESHING": *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 54, 55; *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, p. 70. 5. THE DESIGNATION "THY SERVANT (A. V., "CHILD") JESUS" IN ACTS 3: 13; 4: 30: *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 67, 68.

Lesson 4. LIFE WITHIN THE CHURCH. The Community of Goods During the Early Years, and the Sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 63. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the sense of Christian love and brotherhood affected the social life of the believers, and how this gave opportunity for the sin of Ananias and Sapphira.

§ 64. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Recall your experience in teaching previous lessons; and in view of the suggestions made in *The Outlook* and in § 4, Lesson 1, in this *MANUAL*, note the points at which the class work has not been satisfactory, or seems capable of improvement.

(2) Note that the rights of property were not abolished, but that the law governing the use of property was subordinated to the law of love to such a degree that the result was a virtual community of goods. Each one regarded himself, not as owner, but as steward of the property entrusted to him.

(3) Make it clear that the contributions which flowed into the common treasury were not compulsory, but voluntary. Each one was permitted to retain or bestow whatever he pleased. Yet so strong was the feeling of brotherhood that the majority seem to have sold all their possessions and placed the proceeds at the feet of the apostles.

(4) Call attention to the fact that this ideal communism was practiced by the church in Jerusalem only; that the practical result, as seen perhaps in the subsequent impoverishment of the church, was not altogether happy; and that the practice is nowhere inculcated in the New Testament.

(5) Contrast the open-hearted generosity of Barnabas with the hypocritical selfishness of Ananias and his wife, and show why their sin deserved such severe and sudden punishment.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 65. **Primitive Forms of Worship.** The first Christians assembled daily either in the Temple, or in private houses; in the latter case they met in small companies, since their numbers were already too great for one chamber to hold them all. Discourses on the doctrine of salvation were addressed to believers and to those who were just won over to the faith, and prayers were offered up. As the predominating consciousness of the joy of redemption influenced and sanctified the whole of earthly life, nothing earthly could remain untransformed by this relation to a higher state. Thus even the daily meal of which believers partook as members of one family was sanctified by it. . . . At the close of the meal, the presider distributed bread and wine to the persons present, as a memorial of Christ's similar distribution to the disciples. Thus every meal was consecrated to the Lord, and, at the same time, was a meal of brotherly love. Hence the designations afterwards chosen were . . . "Lord's Supper" and "Love-feast."
— *Neander*: *Planting and Training*, pp. 22, 23.

HAVING ALL THINGS COMMON.

§ 66. **The Origin of Church Communism.** The first Christian Pentecost and the days succeeding it were a period of strained expectation, a season of intense religious excitement, which naturally led to the community of goods. There was no apostolic rule or law laid down in the matter. It seems to have been a course of action to which the converts spontaneously resorted, as the logical deduction from two principles which they held; first, their brotherhood and union in Christ; secondly, the nearness of Christ's second advent. The time

was short. The Master had passed into the invisible world whence He would shortly reappear. Why should they not then, as brethren in Christ, have one common purse, and spend the whole time in waiting and watching for that loved presence? This seems a natural explanation of the origin of a line of policy which has been often appealed to in the practical life of modern Europe as an example for modern Christians; and yet, when we examine it more closely, we can see that this book of the Acts of the Apostles, while it tells of their mistake, carries with it the correction of the error into which these earliest disciples fell. The community of goods was adopted in no other Church. At Corinth, Ephesus, Rome, we hear nothing of it in those primitive times. — *Stokes*: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 197, 198.

§ 67. **Communism in Jerusalem, both Voluntary and Partial.** It was not required of the members that they surrender their property for the benefit of their brethren. For Peter said to Ananias, "While it remained, did it not remain thine own? And after it was sold was it not in thy power?" Such a gift was wholly voluntary. Ananias might have been a member "in good standing" without surrendering any of his possessions. It was not regarded as a term of fellowship, and it was not a condition of membership in the new church. There is not much danger in a communism that is voluntary, for it is not likely to become extremely popular. It was also partial, for a little later we find that Mary, the mother of Mark, had a house in Jerusalem (Acts. 12: 12). Even of Ananias and Sapphira it is said that they sold *a* possession. It by no means follows that that was all they had. — *Thatcher*: History of the Apostolic Church, p. 78.

§ 68. **Effects of Communism on the Jerusalem Church.** The Church of Jerusalem, as the apostolic history shows us, reaped the natural results of this false step. They adopted the principles of communism; they lost hold of that principle of individual life and exertion which lies at the very root of all civilization and all advancement, and they fell, as a natural result, into the direst poverty. There was no reason in the nature of its composition why the Jerusalem Church should have been more poverty-stricken than the Churches of Ephesus, Philippi, or Corinth. Slaves and very humble folk constituted the staple of these Churches. At Jerusalem a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith, and the priests were, as a class, in easy circumstances. . . . There was nothing to make the mother church of Christendom that pauper community we find it to have been all through St. Paul's ministry, save the one initial mistake, which doubtless the Church authorities found it very hard afterwards to retrieve; for when men get into the habit of living upon alms it is very difficult to restore the habits of healthy independence. — *Stokes*: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 198–200.

§ 69. **Perfect Citizens Needed for an Ideal Commonwealth.** [In the early church] each felt that he held his possessions only as a trust, and if occasion called for it, they were to be given up. Such love towards one another, Christ had foretold, should be a mark of His disciples. . . . All those who have sketched a perfect society, as Plato in his *Republic*, and Sir Thos. More in his *Utopia*, have placed among their regulations this kind of community of goods which was established by the first Christians. In theory it is the perfection of a commonwealth, but there is need of perfection in the citizens before it can be realized. There can be no question that an expectation of Christ's immediate return from heaven, acting along with the unity of thoughts and feelings, made these men willing to part with their possessions and goods, their being, as we shall see from the case of Ananias, no constraint upon them to do so. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 51.

§ 70. **The Ideal Commonwealth at Present Impracticable.** The ideal perfection of man's condition is just that, in which neither poor nor rich are to be found, but every individual has his wants supplied. Intimations that such a condition must one day be realized, are to be found, not only in the reckless cry after freedom and equality, but also in the most exalted of our race. Pythagoras and Plato were captivated with this idea; the Essenes and other small bodies attempted to realize it. But the outward realization of it requires certain internal conditions; and just because these conditions were wanting, the attempts referred to could not but fail. These conditions, however, were secured by the Redeemer, who poured pure brotherly love into the hearts of believers; but as the Church herself still appears in this world externally veiled, so the true community of goods cannot be outwardly practised.—*Olshausen*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 102.

§ 71. **The Spirit only of Communism to be Imitated.** This practice of the apostolic church ought not to be considered as in a literal sense the ideal for imitation in all succeeding ages; it must have been a deviation from the natural course of social development, such as could agree only with the extraordinary manifestation of the divine life in the human race at that particular period. Only the *spirit* and *disposition* here manifested in thus amalgamating the early possessions of numbers into one common fund, are the models for the church in its development through all ages. For as Christianity never subverts the existing natural course of development in the human race, but sanctifies it by a new spirit, it necessarily recognizes the division of wealth (based on that development), and the inequalities arising from it in the social relations; while it draws from these inequalities the materials for the formation and exercise of Christian virtue, and strives to lessen them by the only true and never-failing means, namely, the power of love. This, we find, agrees with the practice of the churches subsequently founded by the apostles, and with the directions given by Paul for the exercise of Christian liberty.—*Neander*: Planting and Training, p. 24.

§ 72. **Modern Social Theories.** The following definitions and outlines of socialistic theories which are advanced at the present time, are quoted either from representative men or from standard authorities. In reading them, notice how they all purpose to relieve humanity from the evils which now afflict it, by a *radical change in the organization of society, rather than, as the gospel does, by a radical change in the hearts of men*. True brotherhood among men, taught by Christ, and hinted at in §§ 71–73 above, can never be realized by force. Theories, which ignore the selfishness and sin—the sinful tendencies—in human nature, are impracticable until we have perfect men to deal with.

(1) *Communism* means the negation of private property; it describes a society in which the land and instruments of production would be held as joint property and used for the common account, industry being regulated by a magistrate, and the produce being publicly divided in equal shares, or according to wants, or on some other principle of distributive justice.—*Globe Encyclopedia*.

(2) *Socialism* holds an intermediate position between pure Communism and simple coöperation. Unlike Communism, it does not advocate the absolute abolition of property, but aims simply at a more just and equitable distribution of it.—*Johnson's Universal Cyclopadia*.

(3) *State Socialism* is the doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by the government, regardless of individual choice. The idea is that State control would bring the individual a much larger liberty than he now enjoys.

(4) *Nationalism*.—Workmen will not receive a just proportion of the product of their labor until they receive the whole product. . . . In order to receive the

profits which now go to the employers, they must become their own employers [by assuming] . . . through their salaried [government] agents the conduct of industry . . . for the benefit of the people as the principals. . . . [Then] there will be no ground left for a dispute between workmen and capitalists, for every one will be at one and the same time employer and employee. — *Edward Bellamy*.

(5) *Anarchism* is the doctrine that all the affairs of men should be managed by individuals or voluntary associations, and that the State should be abolished. . . . A just distribution of the products of labor is to be obtained by destroying all sources of income except labor. These sources may be summed up in one word, — usury; and the three principal forms of usury are interest, rent, and profit. These all rest upon legal privilege and monopoly [the result of government]. . . . When all drains upon labor are stopped, labor will be left in possession of its product. — *Benj. R. Tucker*.

THE SIN OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA.

§ 73. **A Study in Hypocrisy.** The offense of Ananias and Sapphira showed contempt for God, vanity and ambition in the offenders, and utter disregard of the corruption which they were bringing into the society. Such sin, committed in despite of the light which they possessed, called for a special mark of Divine indignation, and to those who, likewise filled with the Spirit, knew all that had been done and why it was done, there is no shock produced by the terrible doom of the sinners, nor any language employed in the narration but the simplest and plainest. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 53.

§ 74. **Motive for their Crime.** Ananias and Sapphira coveted popularity and high position which they saw those enjoying who had thus given all they possessed to their brethren and were spending their lives in the services of the gospel. But this popularity came high; it would cost them their possessions. And such a price they were unwilling to pay. So they tried to get it by means of hypocrisy. They professed to give all that they had received for the piece of property which they had sold. Hypocrites are a hindrance in any good movement. The better the movement, the greater danger from such people, and the more injurious are their presence and influence. A few individuals of such character, who in this way had got leading positions in the young church, could have ruined it. The danger was great, the remedy severe. — *Thatcher*: History of the Apostolic Church, p. 80.

§ 75. **The Falsehood and Doom of Sapphira.** Peter gave her no time or opportunity to learn what had transpired. Instantly he asks the plain direct question as to the sum received for the land. And as instantly, unhesitatingly, she reaffirms in words the acted falsehood of her now dead husband. To this, her last utterance, Peter responds by stating the aggravation of their guilt, in their deliberate agreement to deceive and defraud the Spirit of God, and then prophetically announces *her* like fearful doom and burial with her husband. Speechless, also, *she* falls and dies. By the same hands her body is laid beside her husband. — *Butler*: Bible-Work, New Test., vol. ii, p. 37a.

§ 76. **Severity of the Punishment.** Those who criticise the severity of the punishment find fault with God. It appears unduly severe only if our consciences fail to judge aright the heinousness of the sin. Observe, (1) That no sentence is pronounced by Peter. There is nothing even to indicate that he anticipated the death of Ananias. The death of Sapphira he foretold . . . , but he did not inflict. . . . (2) The death of Ananias, if it stood alone, might, perhaps, be attributed to the natural effect of shame and remorse at the public exposure of his

hypocrisy. Coupled with the immediately succeeding death of his wife, it is impossible for an unprejudiced reader to doubt that it was the special and direct infliction of God. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 66a.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 77. **The Essential Basis of Christian Unity.** An external unity of the many bodies into which Christendom is broken up, resting on uniformity in creed and practice, seems at present unattainable. But a practical Christian unity, resting on a common participation in the life of Christ is not only attainable, but it should manifest itself in a feeling of brotherliness and sympathy toward all who have the spirit of Christ, and of joyful coöperation with them as far as possible in all Christian work.

§ 78. **A Perfect Community not to be Realized at Present.** An ideally perfect social organization demands as its basis an ideally perfect human constituency. This fact does not, however, release us from the duty of trying to remedy in great measure the flagrant evils and inequalities that are tolerated in the present state of society.

§ 79. **The Uplifting of the Individual Man Must Precede the Uplifting of the Community.** No scheme for the bettering of society as a whole can be largely or permanently successful that does not take into account the moral uplifting of the individual man. Social, political, and economic conditions may be improved, the burdens and responsibilities of the community may be more evenly distributed, but so long as selfishness remains the dominant force in human nature, the evils which are suppressed in one form will speedily break out in another.

§ 80. **The Kingdom of God among Men.** In so far as the kingdom of God is realized among men, it displaces selfishness and introduces the royal law of love. Were selfishness everywhere displaced by love, most of the evils that now afflict society would disappear at once.

§ 81. **Christianity the Only Permanent Remedy for the World's Ills.** Men are beginning to realize as never before that the mission of Christ in the world is not fulfilled by rescuing an individual here and there and fitting him for heaven. Its mission also concerns this world, the uplifting and renewing of all life, individual and social, intellectual and moral, political and religious. It is the only power in the world that can permanently and successfully accomplish this result, since it does not waste its energy in applying remedies at the surface, but, by purifying human life at the center, purifies all the outgoings of that life.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PRIVATE WORSHIP AND THE TEMPLE SERVICE: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 40-51. 2. THE FIRST FORM OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY: *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 20-28. 3. COMMUNITY OF GOODS IN THE EARLY CHURCH: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 81-87. 4. ORIGIN OF CHURCH OFFICERS: *Ibid*, pp. 92-96; *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 29-36. 5. THE TRANSITION FROM JUDAISM TO CHRISTIANITY: *Ibid*, pp. 36, 37; *Fisher*, Beginnings of Christianity, pp. 469-472.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

**Lesson 5.—THE APOSTLES ARRESTED AND BEATEN. The
Renewal of Persecution.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.*

§ 82. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the twofold effect of the many apostolic miracles upon (1) the people, and (2) the rulers; and how the latter would have slain the apostles, but, being dissuaded by Gamaliel, severely flogged them for their disobedience, and let them go rejoicing that they were permitted to suffer for the name of Christ.

§ 83. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Follow in general the Directions for Study in the Quarterly, and the additional suggestions already given in the MANUAL. In particular:

(2) Emphasize the fact that the many miracles wrought by the apostles were not performed by their power, but by that of the Holy Spirit; and that they were not wrought for the profit or glory of the apostles, but simply to accredit them as God's messengers.

(3) Notice that these displays of divine power through the apostles naturally made a most favorable impression on the multitudes, who themselves, or in the persons of their kindred and friends, were joyfully experiencing the healing and converting influences of that power.

(4) But note that the rulers, seeing the people drawn away from themselves, and their own authority set at naught, were so filled with jealousy and rage that, except for the calm and commanding influence of Gamaliel, they would have murdered the apostles.

(5) Note, furthermore, how this persecution was incited chiefly by the Sadducean party, who, owing to their disbelief in a spiritual world or a future life, regarded the story of Christ's resurrection as a pernicious delusion, which ought by all means to be stamped out.

(6) Yet the apostles themselves, in the face of this materialistic unbelief, were granted fresh and convincing evidence of the reality of that spiritual world by an angelic messenger who opened the prison gates for them; and, though they

were scourged for their disobedience of the Sanhedrin's commands, they were not disheartened by this, but rejoiced the more at being counted worthy to suffer for the sake of him whom they knew as the risen and exalted Christ.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

MANY APOSTOLIC MIRACLES.

§ 84. **A New Feature of Apostolic Work, and its Effect.** The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira seem now to us extraordinary and awe-inspiring, and sufficient to strike terror into the hearts of all unbelievers; but probably the story of them had never reached the ears of the authorities. . . . The public miracles which St. Peter wrought, these were the things which brought matters to a crisis, and called afresh the attention of the Sanhedrin, charged as they were with all religious authority, as the miracle of healing wrought upon the impotent man had led to the arrest of the Apostles on a previous occasion. . . . The deaths of Ananias and Sapphira are recorded . . . at full length, because they bring eternal lessons of justice, judgment, and truth along with them. The numerous public miracles wrought by Peter . . . are passed wholly over in the Scriptures as matters of no spiritual interest. . . . Only one [of their effects is] noted at length by the sacred writer; they led to the fresh arrest of Peter and the other Apostles by the High Priest and the sect of the Sadducees, and their incarceration in the public prison attached to the temple. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, pp. 230–232.

§ 85. **The Second Attack on the Apostles Inspired by the Sadducees.** This second interference of the highest Jewish tribunal with respect to the affairs of the Church, is marked by increased bitterness of feeling, and may be distinctly traced to the influence of the Sadducean party. . . . Luke does not say that the high priest himself belonged to that sect (and no evidence of his connection with it exists elsewhere), but simply informs us that the Sadducees coöperated with him on this occasion. If Annas was a Pharisee, it is quite possible that the public appearance of the Christians as a distinct body, temporarily influenced the party feelings of the Pharisees and Sadducees, in so far at least, that the distrust with which they regarded each other, was forgotten in the presence of a common enemy. When, therefore, the Sadducean party unequivocally assumed a hostile attitude toward the apostles, the high priest was easily persuaded to become the ally of the former. As the resurrection of Jesus was the central fact to which the preaching of the apostles continually referred, the most violent opposition which they encountered, naturally proceeded precisely from the sect of the Sadducees. — *Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, p. 93a.

§ 86. **Beliefs of the Sadducees and Pharisees Compared.** The Pharisees teach "that every soul is imperishable, but that only those of the righteous pass into another body, while those of the wicked are, on the contrary, punished with eternal torment." . . . The Sadducees, on the other hand, say that there is no resurrection. . . . "They deny the continuance of the soul and the punishments and rewards of the world below." "According to their teaching, souls perish together with bodies." . . . The Sadducees, by denying the resurrection and immortality in general, renounced at the same time the entire Messianic hope, at least in that form which later Judaism had given it. . . . The Pharisees also taught the existence of angels and spirits, while the Sadducees denied them. . . . [The Pharisees are called] by their adversaries, . . . "the separatists," who for the sake of their own special cleanness separated themselves from the bulk of the nation. . . . [The Sadducees] *acknowledged only the written Thorah* [the Penta-

teuch] as binding, and on the other hand rejected the entire traditional interpretation . . . by the scribes. . . . All other differences were such as would naturally result, if the one did not acknowledge the obligation of the other's exegetical traditions. — *Schürer*: Jewish People, 2nd Div., vol. ii, pp. 13, 14, 20, 34, 38.

THE APOSTLES BEFORE THE COUNCIL.

§ 87. **The Apostles Delivered from Prison by an Angel.** *An angel by night opened the prison-doors.* As if for a protest against the actions of those [the Sadducees] who taught that "there was neither angel nor spirit." There is no possibility of explaining St. Luke's words into anything but a miraculous deliverance. He gives no word that can be twisted into any other meaning. It was not an earthquake, it was not a friendly human being who interposed to procure the release of the Apostles. The writer readily acknowledges in this very chapter the intervention of Gamaliel and its effect, but he is here speaking of supernatural aid. If it be remarked that the Apostles make no mention of their miraculous deliverance when they are called upon for their defence, it may be answered that they in no case dwell on the miracles either wrought by or for them, except where they have been wrought under the eyes of men and are to be used as signs of the Divine power which was working in and for the Church. To enter on a description of a miracle which had been wrought as this deliverance had been, and to ground their claims to be heard upon circumstances of which the eyes of those to whom they spoke did not bear testimony, is foreign to the whole character of the Apostolic ministry. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 62, 63.

§ 88. **The Meeting Place of the Sanhedrin.** Note the marvellous accuracy of detail in St. Luke's narrative. The Sanhedrin used to sit in the temple, but a few years before the period at which we have arrived, four or five at most, they removed from the temple into the city, a fact which is just hinted at in the fifth verse of the fourth chapter, where we are told that the rulers, and elders, and scribes were gathered together in Jerusalem, that is, in the city, not in the temple; while again in this passage we read that when the High Priest came and convened the council and all the senate of the children of Israel, they sent their officers to bring the prisoners before them. These officers after a while returned with the information that the Apostles were preaching in the temple. If the Sanhedrin were meeting in the temple, they would doubtless have learned this fact as soon as they assembled, especially as they did not sit till after the morning sacrifice, several hours after the Apostles appeared in the temple. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, p. 233.

§ 89. **St. Peter's Defense Before the Sanhedrin.** [His address] exemplifies the fulfillment of Christ's promise in Mt. 10: 19. . . . Observe (1) *its brevity*: three sentences; (2) *its compactness and completeness*; it declares the crucifixion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord, his double character as King and Saviour, his mission to cleanse away sin, the condition of receiving the benefits he affords, repentance which is itself his gift, and the twofold evidence of these truths, the human and the divine. It may fairly be called the true apostles' creed; (3) *its Christian spirit*: Courage without bitterness; in it Peter refuses obedience to the prohibition of the rulers, and accuses them of slaying on the cross the Prince of Israel, but preaches to them the Gospel of Salvation, and offers to them the gift of the Holy Ghost, on the conditions of repentance and faith. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 72b.

§ 90. **The Appeal of the Apostles from Human to Divine Law.** The

Jews, though as a conquered nation they were subject to the Romans, acknowledged the members of the Sanhedrim as their legitimate rulers; and the injunction which the Sanhedrim imposed on the apostles at this time emanated from the highest human authority to which they could have felt that they owed allegiance. The injunction which this authority laid on the apostles clashed with their religious convictions, their sense of the rights of the infinite Ruler, and in this conflict between human law and divine, they declared that the obligation to obey God was paramount to every other.

The apostles and early Christians acted on the principle, that human governments forfeit their claim to obedience when they require what God has plainly forbidden, or forbid what he has required. They claimed the right of judging for themselves what was right and what was wrong, in reference to their religious and political duties, and they regulated their conduct by that decision. . . . In applying this principle, it will be found that the apostles in every instance abstained from all forcible resistance to the public authorities. They refused utterly to obey the mandates which required them to violate their consciences, but they endured quietly the penalties which the executors of the law enforced against them. They evaded the pursuit of their oppressors if they could, secreted themselves from arrest, left their prisons at the command of God, yet when violent hands were laid upon them, and they were dragged before magistrates, to the dungeon, or to death, they resisted not the wrong, but "followed his steps, who, when he suffered, threatened not, but committed himself to Him that judgeth righteously."—*Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 83. (See also § 57, Manual, Lesson 3.)

THE ADVICE OF GAMALIEL.

§ 91. **Gamaliel: His Position and Influence.** [He is] described in Acts 5:34 as "a Pharisee, a doctor of the Law, had in honour with all the people." This description exactly corresponds with that given in the Mishna of Rabban Gamaliel I., who died about A.D. 57, and was at the height of his influence at the time of the trial described in Acts 5. He belonged to the milder and more liberal school of Hillel, whose grandson he is said to have been. . . . He was the teacher of St. Paul. . . . He is described as president of the Sanhedrin, but this is probably a late and untrustworthy tradition . . . ; in the narrative of Acts 5 he appears as an ordinary member, though having great weight. . . . His discourse in Acts 5:35-39 seems to regard the question of "this counsel" being from men or from God, as an open one, without betraying a leaning to one side or the other. Still the syntactical connexion of "let them alone," with the words "lest haply ye be found fighting against God," may be held to show an inclination to the Christian side, which is not inconsistent with the probable attitude of the Pharisees at this period as contrasted with the active persecuting zeal of the Sadducees.—*Bernard*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Gamaliel," p. 1122.

§ 92. **Gamaliel's Advice Respecting the Apostles.** The Pharisees [were] . . . now to all appearance in the minority, at least among the rulers of the Sanhedrim. The Sadducees were determined to crush the apostles, expressly because they taught in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. Gamaliel might agree with them in thinking our Lord an impostor; he might join more fervently than they did in the denunciation of Him as a blasphemer; but he might reflect that if he allowed the other party to put down the disciples of Jesus on this ground, they would afterwards boast that they had condemned the doctrine of a resurrection, as the Pharisees professed it. The people would not draw nice distinctions; they would say that the Jewish Sanhedrim had been entirely converted to the

belief of the Sadducees. . . . Neither the words of Gamaliel nor the few facts which we know of him permit us to offer a much higher explanation of his conduct than this. Saul of Tarsus, who was brought up at his feet, who had learned his lessons, and belonged to his sect, cannot have understood him to mean that the persecution of the Nazarenes was in itself unlawful or unwise. — *Maurice*: Acts, pp. 61, 62.

§ 93. **Gamaliel's Advice not a Universal Principle of Action.** In such a state of indecision, and in the case of a phenomenon as yet altogether experimental, Gamaliel's counsel must certainly be regarded as wise. But, absolutely considered, it is by no means safe. For, in the first place, the long continuance of a system is no criterion at all of its divinity. Look, for instance, at Heathenism and Mohammedanism. And then, his principle, consistently carried out in every case, would put an end to all punishment, and introduce perfect indifference in place of the earnestness of the law. As soon as a man ascertains the nature of a cause, he must either decidedly approve and actively support it, or condemn it and seek to counteract its influence. We say this against a thoughtless overvaluation of Gamaliel's advice, which many treat as an oracle, and as a part of the word of God himself. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 210, note.

§ 94. **The Insurrections of Judas and Theudas.** The two historical events to which Gamaliel appeals, are connected with the Galilean Judas and with Theudas. . . . This Judas . . . instigated the people to rebel, at the time when Augustus directed Quirinius to take the census . . . ; he represented this measure as the means by which a yoke was to be put upon the people. . . . Luke informs us that Judas himself perished, while Josephus records the death of his two sons; the two statements are complementary to one another. And the remark of Josephus that the band of Judas afterwards re-appeared during the Jewish war, may be easily reconciled with the text before us, which simply mentions the dispersion, but not the entire extinction of that band. . . .

The general facts which Josephus relates concerning a certain Theudas, perfectly agree with those recorded by Luke, but the chronological data are totally different. . . . 1. Theudas incited the people to revolt, and found numerous adherents; 2. He professed to be a person of special importance; for instance, he styled himself a prophet, and promised to divide the waters of the Jordan by his word; 3. He was slain and his party became extinct. . . . According to Luke, the insurrection of Judas was posterior to that of Theudas, and the latter was, of course, anterior to the delivery of this address. . . . It is, therefore, usually assumed that the Theudas of Luke was a different person from the one who bears the same name in Josephus . . . [or it is] an erroneous chronological statement attributed by Luke to Gamaliel. — *Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, p. 98.

THE APOSTLES BEATEN AND SET FREE.

§ 95. **The Apostles Scourged by the Sanhedrin.** The Sanhedrin would at least not expose themselves, as if they had instituted an examination wholly without result, and therefore they order the punishment of stripes, usual for very various kinds of crime — here, proved *disobedience* — but very ignominious. — *Meyer*: Commentary, Acts, p. 119.

§ 96. **The Jewish Mode of Scourging.** A Jewish disciplinary flogging, when forty stripes save one were inflicted, was so severe that death sometimes resulted from it. St. Paul, as he tells us in 2 Cor. 11: 24, was five times flogged by the Jews. When the Jews inflicted this punishment the culprit was tied to a pillar in the synagogue; the executioner, armed with a scourge of three distinct

lashes, inflicted the punishment; while an official standing by read selected portions of the law between each stroke. Thirteen strokes of the threefold scourge was equivalent to the thirty-nine stripes. This was the flogging suffered on this occasion. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, p. 244, and footnote.

§ 97. **Suffering for "The Name."** Not *his* name, but *the* name. The definite article attached, indicates it as the only name, the one above every other name, as the Scriptures are *the* writings, and the Bible is *the* book. Observe the contrast, counted *worthy* to suffer *shame*. . . . "This influence of the holy name, which could transmute shame and suffering endured for its sake, into honor and rejoicing, greatly transcends all that the name of Jehovah (in the O. T.) had ever accomplished. Here, therefore, we have actual demonstration that the name of Jesus is the name." — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 746.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 98. **Power or Capacity Implies Obligation.** As the power to work miracles was given to the Apostles that they might thereby benefit men and glorify God, so all power, whether of money, social rank, intellect, or moral influence is given, not that we may use it for our own selfish ends, but for the good of others. From each to all according to his ability to give, not from all to each according to his ability to get, is the Christian principle.

§ 99. **Source of Moral Power.** The Apostles knew that they were right, and that God was on their side; hence they dared to resist the highest Jewish authority, indifferent to what became of themselves, but sublimely confident of his triumph for whose Name they suffered. "One, with God, is a majority."

§ 100. **The Effect of Moral Cowardice.** One of the greatest hindrances to Christian work in the world is the fear of what people will say about it. Enthusiasm, especially in a good cause, is not fashionable. Our best impulses are oftentimes stifled by the shrug of other people's shoulders.

§ 101. **Obedying God Rather than Men.** It is never right for a man to act contrary to his conscience. But at the same time it behooves him to discriminate sharply between the voice of conscience, and his own obstinacy, or self-will, or that something in him which says, "I won't." Man's only safe and imperative guide is a conscience thoroughly enlightened by the word of God.

§ 102. **Resisting Established Government.** A government that fails to subserve the good purposes for which government is established, that becomes a terror to the law-abiding and a protection to the lawless, should be resisted and reformed; if it cannot be reformed, it should be crushed. The right of revolution is based on the duty of government to subserve the best interests of the people.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE FIRST PERSECUTION A TYPE OF ALL LATER PERSECUTIONS: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, p. 209. 2. THE SANHEDRIN NOW AFRAID OF JESUS: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 60, 61. 3. GAMALIEL'S ADVICE PRUDENT, BUT NOT THE BEST: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 243, 244. 4. GAMALIEL'S ADVICE PRACTICALLY IDENTICAL WITH A SAYING OF CHRIST: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 61, 62. 5. THE BEATING OF THE APOSTLES INCONSISTENT WITH GAMALIEL'S ADVICE: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 344, 345. 6. GAMALIEL'S HISTORICAL ALLUSIONS NO GROUND FOR DISCREDITING THE ACCURACY OF LUKE'S NARRATIVE: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 63, 64.

Lesson 6. — THE STONING OF STEPHEN. The Choice of the Seven,
and the First Christian Martyr.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 103. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how certain abuses crept in along with the community of goods in Jerusalem; how these abuses were corrected by the appointment of seven men of good report to oversee this business; and how Stephen, the chief of the Seven, by preaching enlarged views of Christianity, became the first Christian martyr.

§ 104. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note that the community of goods in Jerusalem, though presenting an ideal social condition, presented also various almost irresistible temptations to abuse it. An instance of this in one direction has already been seen in the case of Ananias and Sapphira. Another instance of this in another direction and on a more general scale, occurred in the unfair discriminations against the widows of the Hellenists. The ideal social condition can never become the real one, until the Spirit of Christ has taken full possession of all hearts and is the absolutely controlling power in society.

(2) Note again, that this trouble, which for a time disturbed the peace of the church, was happily removed by the appointment of seven men, a large part, if not all, of whom were Hellenists, who relieved the apostles of care and responsibility in this matter; and, that while these men are not called "deacons" in the text, yet it is probable that their office afterwards suggested the office of "deacon" in the church.

(3) Speak of the fact that Stephen was undoubtedly a Hellenist, and as such likely to be more hospitable toward new and enlarged conceptions of Christianity than those who had experienced only the narrow and exclusive training of the Palestinian Jews. New truth, however, always encounters opposition. Accordingly, it was not long before Stephen found himself in the power of unscrupulous enemies anxious to crush both the preacher and his truth.

(4) Point out how Stephen, confident that he could expect no justice from his judges, proves in his address that their rejection of the truth which he proclaimed was only in accordance with the past history of their nation, which from the first had set itself in deadly opposition to every new revelation from God, and had at length crowned its hostility to all his messengers by crucifying its Messiah.

(5) Note in closing the character of Stephen, as seen in his openness to the truth, his courage in proclaiming his convictions, his appearance before the council, his vision of heaven, and his Christ-like spirit at his death. Few are the men of the New Testament, even, with a nobler record than his.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE APPOINTMENT OF THE SEVEN.

§ 105. **The Contempt of the Palestinian Jews for the Hellenists.** There were many Jews outside of Palestine who had taken much of the Greek culture, and were consequently called Hellenists. They were, however, despised by the Jews in Palestine, because they lived outside the Holy Land. For according to their conception, all foreign lands were unclean and all those who lived in them were necessarily contaminated and were as far as possible to be shunned.—*Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 81.

§ 106. **The Cause of the First Dissension in the Church.** It was this religious pride of the Palestinian members of the church that first disturbed its peace. The widows of the Hellenists, that is, of these Greek Jews, were slighted in the distribution of the alms. Those that had charge of the funds were not impartial in their treatment of the poor members who needed help. The other poor were cared for, but the poor widows who had been so unfortunate as to have lived in an unclean land were despised and neglected. We do not know who had been attending to this work, but their conduct was an offense against the principles of brotherhood and equality which had been at first received with such joy and enthusiasm. The line between Hellenists and Palestinian Jews had seemed to be effaced, but this injustice and partiality at once awakened the old feelings, the party lines were quickly drawn again, and the Hellenists stood on one side and the Palestinian Jews on the other. As they could not settle the difficulty, they appealed to the apostles.—*Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 81, 82.

§ 107. **The Appointment of the Seven.** The Apostles meet the crisis with singular tact and moderation. They do not resent the suspicion; they are not careful to vindicate themselves against it. They remembered, it may be, the precedent presented by the life of Moses, and they act, as he had acted, by delegating part of their authority to others. . . . The number may have had its origin in the general reverence for the number Seven among the Jews. . . . It is to be noted that the men thus appointed are never called "deacons" in the New Testament. When they are referred to again it is as "the Seven," as though they were a distinct and peculiar body. Their functions were, of course, in some degree, analogous to those of the "deacons" of the Pastoral Epistles and the later organization of the Church; but these, as we have seen, had their prototypes in the "young men," as contrasted with "elders," in ch. 5:6, 10.—*Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 96b-98a.

STEPHEN'S MINISTRY AND ARREST.

§ 108. **Jewish Synagogues in Jerusalem.** According to the Rabbinical books there were upwards of four hundred and fifty synagogues in Jerusalem [this is not surprising, since, according to the Rabbis, *ten* men were sufficient to form a synagogue]; Jews of different dialects and provinces naturally worshipped together, and the synagogues naturally took their names from the nationality of the congregations. Whether here five synagogues are intended, or one or two, which embraced the worshippers of the different districts, is uncertain. In the synagogue service it was generally permitted to the leaders of any new school to set forth their opinions. Hence Stephen's preaching in the synagogue, which aroused the opposition of the Pharisees.—*Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 79a.

§ 109. **The Exclusiveness of Judaism.** [In the eyes of the Palestinian Jews] three things were especially holy; the land, the law and the temple.

Palestine was holy, while every other land was unclean. No one could live outside of Palestine and serve God. They believed that God loved Palestine, but every other country was an abomination in his sight. As to the law, they had made an idol of it. It was holy in and of itself. It was the last and highest expression of God's holy will. . . . Since the worship of God by sacrifice had been forbidden in every other part of Palestine, the temple had increased in importance, and it is scarcely necessary to speak of the idolatrous veneration with which the Jews regarded it. These three things had an innate holiness, they were to endure forever. For when the Messiah should come, Palestine was to enjoy his favor and presence, while the rest of the world was to be subjected and ruled with a rod of iron. . . . They thought that religion could not exist in any other form than in that of Judaism. — *Thatcher* : Apostolic Church, pp. 82, 83.

§ 110. **Stephen the First to Understand the True Nature of Christianity.** It is a fact worth noting, because characteristic of the period, that not one of the Twelve, but a Hellenist, was the first to discover that Christ's teachings made an end of Judaism. All had supposed that Christianity was but the completion of Judaism, not its supplanter. Stephen was the first to understand the true character of Christianity. . . . He perceived that Christ had shown that religion was a matter of the heart; that he had freed religion from every external, and thereby had made of it a universal religion. — *Thatcher* : Apostolic Church, pp. 83, 84.

§ 111. **Stephen's Views Influenced by his Hellenistic Culture.** When Christ spoke to his apostles of certain things which they could not yet comprehend, but which must be first revealed to them by the Holy Spirit, he, no doubt, referred to the nature of that worship of God which is not necessarily confined to time or place, or to any kind whatever of outward observances — the worship in spirit and in truth, with which the abolition of the Mosaic ceremonial law . . . , and the union of all nations in one spiritual worship and one faith, were closely connected. . . . The Hellenistic Stephen needed not to attain this mental freedom . . . , for he was already, by his early development in Hellenistic culture, more free from these fetters; he was not so much entangled in Jewish nationality; and hence his faith could in this respect be more readily developed into Christian knowledge. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, p. 48.

§ 112. **The Conflict between Christianity and Judaism Begun through Stephen's Preaching.** [Stephen] had apprehended the spiritual character of the Gospel better than the apostles themselves, and surrendered himself with absolute faith to the new principle. He soon found himself in the forefront of the struggle that was beginning against Judaism, carried onwards by the boldness of his views quite as much as by his zeal. To this struggle his intervention gave a new turn. The apostles had remained on the defensive in their preaching of Jesus; Stephen broke through this reserve and boldly assumed the offensive. In his public discussions he laid bare the materialistic principle of Pharisaic piety; he pointed out with unsparing plainness the secret cause of that invincible obstinacy with which the Jews had always resisted the word of God. His denunciations of their religious formalism recalled sometimes those accents of the Master which used to excite the Pharisees to fury. This fury again awoke. The capital charge brought against Jesus was renewed against Stephen; false witnesses again repeated the accusation, "We have heard this man speak against the holy place and against the law. We have heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth will destroy the temple, and change the customs that Moses gave us." — *Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, pp. 40, 41.

STEPHEN'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.

§ 113. **Analysis of Stephen's Address.** Stephen's discourse is the complement and development of the parable of the Vineyard. The orator was obliged to throw his speech into this historical form. By doing so he gave the rage of his opponents time to subside, and meanwhile secured the means of showing clearly the true cause of their hatred. The great epochs in the history of the Jewish people furnish the main divisions of his discourse.

The first extends from Abraham to Moses. The nation did not exist as yet; but before its birth it was the object of Divine favour; for to it, in truth, the promises given to the patriarchs were made.

The second epoch lies between Moses and David. In referring to the first period, the orator has extolled the goodness of God; in describing the second, he endeavours to depict with equal force the ingratitude and carnal disposition of the people. This period becomes typical. In Moses the deliverer, Stephen enables us to recognise the image of a far greater Deliverer. His unworthy reception, the opposition he met with and the incredulity with which his word was received, are set forth in such terms that the history of Moses, by an easy transition, becomes the history of Jesus acted out beforehand.

The third period comprises the times of David and Solomon. Stephen breaks off at the building of the temple. . . . He sees in it a distinct fulfilment of God's original promise made to Abraham: "They shall worship Me in this place." . . . In vain the nation displayed its ingratitude. God remained faithful, and the temple was built. . . . The very temple where God should have been worshipped in spirit and in truth, became the centre and support of a bigoted and hypocritical piety. Instead of revealing to all mankind the one universal God, who made heaven and earth, it only served to limit and conceal the majesty of Jehovah. . . .

Thus had Stephen advanced slowly, but always in a straight line, to meet the charge laid against him. He now confronts and grapples with it directly and without hesitation. His answer is deduced from this prolonged narrative with overwhelming effect. . . . Is it surprising that the people to-day show no more intelligence, no better disposition than they had done with regard to Moses, or the prophets, or Jesus? . . . They killed those who foretold the coming of the Righteous One; and when this Righteous One appeared, you became His betrayers and murderers! . . . In other words, You are just like your fathers: At this point the position appears to be changed; the accused has become judge of his accusers. But at the same time he has anticipated, in his reading of the history of the past, the fate which awaits himself and the sentence about to fall upon him. — *Sabatier*: Apostle Paul, pp. 42-45.

§ 114. **Stephen's Denunciation of the Jewish People.** Stephen, in truth, did not for one moment deceive himself. He knew his adversaries well. He has no hope of either convincing or softening them. This sense of the inevitable is manifest from the first. He does not merely point out a few passing errors or accidental failings; his object was to denounce a congenital vice, inherent in the very character of his people and persisting through their entire history, — a carnal disposition, insensible alike to chastisement and grace, and which had borne the same fruit in every age. . . .

This was a radical condemnation of Judaism, such as the Pharisees had not heard since the days of Jesus. Stephen only discloses this view by degrees. At first, he keeps it back and holds his audience in suspense; but as he goes on, his purpose grows clearer, and at each new stage of the history he expresses himself more pointedly and plainly. His hearers begin to murmur and grow excited; Stephen in slow and unrelenting tones unfolds before them this humiliating

history, in which all the time they could recognise their own likeness. When at last he had finished, and when, as he perceives, caution could no longer serve him, he launches forth his whole meaning in the apostrophe, "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised," etc. Then the rage of his adversaries bursts out in turn, and gnashing their teeth they rush upon him. But they interrupted him too late. Stephen has spoken. He yields himself to their fury; and his martyrdom completes his discourse. — *Sabatier*: Apostle Paul, p. 45.

§ 115. **Historical Inaccuracies in Stephen's Address.** (1) *Their Nature.* — [(a) vs. 14.] Threescore and fifteen souls. This number [75] is taken from the LXX [the Septuagint]. In the Hebrew the number is but seventy including Jacob himself. . . . There were many traditions current which probably were well known to the translators of the LXX., and gave rise to their number. . . . Stephen, as was to be expected from the other quotations in this book, and also because he was a Grecian Jew, follows the LXX. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 82, 83.

[(b) vs. 15, 16.] Here there occur several grave errors. Jacob was not carried over and buried at Sychem at all, but at the cave of Machpelah, as is plainly stated in Gen. 1: 13. Again, a plot of ground at Sychem was certainly bought, not by Abraham, however, but by Jacob. Abraham bought the field and cave of Machpelah from Ephron the Hittite. Jacob bought his plot at Sychem from the sons of Emmor. There are in these verses, then, two serious historical mistakes; first as to the true burial-place of Jacob, and then as to the purchaser of the plot of ground at Sychem. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, p. 310.

[(c) vs. 43.] Stephen substitutes Babylon for Damascus in the original prophecy; perhaps, as Alford and Hackett suggest, because the Babylonian captivity was the one most memorable in the Jewish annals. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 90a.

(2) *They Confirm the Narrative.* — A man might easily make any of these slips . . . in the heat of an oration, and they might have even passed unnoticed, as every speaker who has much practice in addressing the public still makes precisely the same kind of mistake. But a romancer, sitting down to forge speeches suitable to the time and place, would never have put into the mouth of his lay figures grave errors about the most elementary facts of Jewish history. . . . The inaccuracies reported as made by St. Stephen are evidences of the genuine character of the oration attributed to him. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, pp. 311, 312.

(3) *They are to be Honestly Recognized.* — The fact of the mistake occurring where it does, will be far more instructive to the Christian student than the most ingenious solution of the difficulty could be, if it teaches him fearlessly and honestly to recognize the phenomena presented by the text of Scripture, instead of wresting them to suit a preconceived theory. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, Acts, vol. ii, p. 72b.

STEPHEN'S VISION AND MARTYRDOM.

§ 116. **The Vision of Stephen.** (1) In so far as the vision of Stephen was *supernatural*, it was not *necessary* that the *material heavens should have been visible* to him; but . . . it would seem that they *were*. . . . Stephen under accusation of blaspheming the *earthly temple*, is granted a sight of the *heavenly temple*; being cited before the *Sadducee High Priest* who believed neither angel nor spirit, he is vouchsafed a vision of the *heavenly HIGH PRIEST*, standing and ministering at the throne amidst the angels and just men made perfect. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 81b, 82.

(2) It is manifest that the vision was given to the inward spiritual eye, and not to that of sense. No priest or scribe saw the glory of the opened heavens, and,

therefore, the words which declared that Stephen saw them seemed to them but an aggravation of guilt that was already deep. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 124a.

§ 117. **The Effect of Stephen's Words about his Vision.** But those high words were too much for the feelings of his audience. Stopping their ears as though to shut out a polluting blasphemy, they rose in a mass from both sides of the semi-circular range in which they sat, and with one wild yell rushed upon Stephen. There was no question any longer of a legal decision. In their rage they took the law into their own hands, and then and there dragged him off to be stoned outside the city gate. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 93.

§ 118. **The Death of Stephen.** It was almost in the words of his Master that when the horrid butchery began — for the precautions to render death speedy seem to have been neglected in the blind rage of his murderers — he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." And when bruised and bleeding he was just able to drag himself to his knees it was again in the spirit of that Lord that he prayed for his murderers, and even the cry of his anguish rang forth in the forgiving utterance — showing how little malice there had been in the stern words he had used before — "Lord, lay not to their charge this sin." With that cry he passed from the wrath of men to the peace of God. The historian ends the bloody tragedy with one weighty and beautiful word, "He fell asleep." — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 94.

§ 119. **The First Mention of Saul.** To fulfil their dreadful task, the witnesses had taken off their garments; and they laid them "at the feet of a young man whose name was Saul."

It is the first allusion in history to a name, destined from that day forward to be memorable for ever in the annals of the world. And how sad an allusion! He stands, not indeed actively engaged in the work of death; but keeping the clothes, consenting to the violence, of those who, in this brutal manner, dimmed in blood the light upon a face which had been radiant as that of an angel with faith and love. . . . Stephen sank in his blood, but his place was taken by the young man who stood there to incite his murderers. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 94, 95.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 120. **Social Harmony Conditioned on the Supremacy of Love.** So long as love reigned supreme in all hearts in the Church at Jerusalem, troubles from within were absent. Until love has dominated all members of society, selfishness in one form or another will inevitably show its disturbing and disintegrating power.

§ 121. **People See what they are Prepared to See.** This holds in respect to every department of thought or activity, whether in literature, art, music, science, morals, or religion. Something in the life of Stephen had prepared him to perceive the larger relations of Christianity. When the revelation came he grasped at once its force and value. Truth comes to him who patiently seeks for it, and who is ready to welcome it in whatever form it comes.

§ 122. **Prejudices are Dangerous Enemies to Truth.** Those who murdered Stephen were swayed by their prejudices. Those who lay claim to religion are sometimes as much domineered by their prejudices as irreligious men are by their vices. The devil knows no surer way of blinding a good man to the truth, than by clapping a strong prejudice over each eye.

§ 123. **Truth More than Life.** Stephen might have kept quiet, and he would not have been hurt. But Stephen's soul had been bathed in the light of divine truth, he knew that truth is from God, and that a life saved by the cowardly suppression of truth is not worth living. A life so saved is a life already lost; whereas a life deliberately and joytully surrendered for the sake of truth is a life gained forever.

§ 124. **The Face of an Angel.** Stephen's face shone because his heart was right toward God. Faces show character. The only way to have a face like an angel is to be like angels in spirit.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE NEW TESTAMENT OFFICE OF "DEACON": Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Deacon." 2. THE RESERVE OF JESUS TOUCHING THE RELATION OF THE LAW TO THE GOSPEL: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, p. 81. 3. THE FURIOUS CONTROVERSIES STARTED BY STEPHEN'S PREACHING: *Ibid.*, pp. 83-86. 4. THE VALUE AND PERTINENCY OF STEPHEN'S SPEECH: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 139. 5. THE AUTHENTIC REPRODUCTION OF STEPHEN'S SPEECH: *Ibid.*, p. 135 f. 6. "THE FACE OF AN ANGEL": *Ibid.*, Amer. Ed., pp. 131, 132. 7. THE YEAR OF STEPHEN'S DEATH: *Stokes*: Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, p. 248. 8. STEPHEN THE FORERUNNER OF PAUL: *Conybeare and Howson*: Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 71, 72.

Lesson 7.—A GREAT PERSECUTION IN JERUSALEM, AND ITS IMMEDIATE RESULTS. The Gospel Carried to Samaria, and the Ethiopian Eunuch Converted.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 125. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the persecution that was intended to destroy the church was divinely overruled to the greater extension of the gospel.

§ 126. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Begin by drawing attention to the main characteristic of the history in Part I—the work of the church while it confined itself to Jerusalem; with this, contrast the characteristics of Part II as presented in Note 10 Progressive grade, Note 28 Intermediate grade, and emphasize the fact that we are now entering upon a new stage in the history.

(2) Show why the authorities at Jerusalem had up to this time tolerated the believers, although they had failed to stop their preaching by threats or by beatings; and why, through the ministry of Stephen, they were led into such a sudden and violent change of attitude toward the church.

(3) Note the fact that, while many of the disciples in addition to their bodily sufferings in the persecution probably lost their possessions, none of them seem to have lost their faith; but wherever they went they carried with them and sought to impart to others that confidence in Jesus as the Messiah, which strengthened them in their trials and comforted them in their sorrows.

(4) Remember that this wider diffusion of the gospel was the divine purpose of

their persecution. Of this, however, the disciples were ignorant, and must have regarded this visitation as only evil, except, perhaps, as they had faith in God's power to bring good out of even the direst calamity.

(5) Recall the fact that Philip's success in Samaria had been prepared for in the brief ministry of our Lord himself; but that, as the personal mission of Jesus concerned first of all the "lost sheep of the house of Israel," he did not permit himself to continue his work in this fruitful field, but left the harvest for others to reap.

(6) Note that while we hear nothing of the Ethiopian eunuch after his conversion, yet we can hardly doubt that on his return to his own land he became a center for the spread of the gospel which he had so joyously received. A tradition attributes to him the origin of the Abyssinian church.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE CHURCH SCATTERED BY PERSECUTION.

§ 127. **The Suddenness and Violence of the Attack.** On the very day of the murder of Stephen, a fierce persecution began against the church. Probably the mob may have hastened from the scene of outrage and violence to the assemblies of the believers, in order to disperse them. This violent, sudden outbreak against those who, until now, had been not only tolerated, but apparently approved, arose doubtless from the fact that Stephen, who was a Greek, had not only preached Jesus, but had declared that the city and temple would be destroyed, and the gospel preached to all nations. The Pharisees, hitherto neutral, now made common cause with their rivals, the Sadducees, against the sect. The prudent cautions of Gamaliel were ignored; the agents of the civil government interfered not for the protection of the Christians, and the wild fury of fanatical bigotry, maddened by blood, rushed upon the defenceless witnesses for the truth, and scattered them. Thus by the violence of the enemies of Christ his followers were compelled to carry out his purpose intimated in Acts 1:8. The dispersion must have been very general, though not absolutely universal, as some, besides the apostles, must have remained, since Saul immediately afterward began to seize and imprison both men and women. — *Ormiston*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 178.

§ 128. **Reasons Why the Apostles Were Allowed to Remain in Jerusalem.** The sequel of the history suggests two reasons for their remaining. (1) The Twelve had learnt the lesson which their Master had taught them, "that the hireling fleeth because he is an hireling," and would not desert their post. A tradition is recorded by Clement of Alexandria and Eusebius, that the Lord had commanded the Apostles to remain for twelve years in Jerusalem lest any should say "We have not heard," and after that date to go forth into the world.

(2) The persecution which was now raging seems to have been directed specially against those who taught, with Stephen, that the "customs" on which the Pharisees laid so much stress should pass away. The Apostles had not as yet proclaimed that truth; had, perhaps, not as yet been led to it. They were conspicuous as worshippers in the Temple, kept themselves from all that was common and unclean, held aloof from fellowship with the Gentiles. They may well have been protected by the favour and reverence with which the great body of the

people still looked on them, and so have been less exposed than the Seven had been to the violence of the storm. It was probable, in the nature of the case, that the Hellenistic disciples, who had been represented by Stephen, should suffer more than others. It was from them that the next great step in the expansion of the Church in due course came. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 128.

THE GOSPEL CARRIED TO SAMARIA BY PHILIP.

§ 129. *The Samaritans. Philip's Preaching to them an Important Advance in the Cause of Christ.* The Samaritans, indeed, possessed the Mosaic law and rested in Judaism, were worshippers of Jehovah, and practised circumcision, but they recognised no book of the Old Testament as sacred except the Pentateuch. The sanctuary of the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim formed the chief offence to the Jews. The temple at that place had already been destroyed by John Hyrcanus 125 years before Christ. But the summit of the mountain was for the Samaritans of that day the sacred place of the worship of God, and is still considered so by their posterity. The Jews felt this to be presumptuous rivalry with their temple at Jerusalem, which, as they alleged, was the only lawful one. In addition to this they were a mixed race, and were regarded by the strict Jews as unclean, and not much better than the heathen, in which respect the Jews were not so far wrong. It is at least a fact that the Samaritans at various times, yielded to the political situation, denied their relationship with the Jews, and gave themselves out as Sidonians and such like. It is just when we take into account the well-known disposition of the Jews towards the Samaritans, that the preaching of Philip in Samaria, together with its result, appears as a decisive and important advance in the cause of Christ. — *Lechler*: Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 114, 115.

§ 130. *Magianism. (1) Its Origin and Principle.* — The Magian system was called the system of light about seven centuries before Christ. A great reformer (Zoroaster) had appeared, who either restored the system to its purity, or created out of it a new system. He said that light is eternal — that the Lord of the universe is light; but because there was an eternal light, there was also an eternal possibility of the absence of light. Light and darkness, therefore, were the eternal principles of the universe — not equal principles, but one the negation of the other. He taught that the soul of man needs light — a light external to itself as well as in itself. . . . There is a capacity in the soul for light; but it is not itself light; it needs the Everlasting light from outside itself. Hence the stars became worshipped as the symbols of this light. But by degrees these stars began to stand in the place of the light Himself. This was the state of things in the days of the Magians [or “wise men” who came to worship Christ].

(2) *Its Relation to Simon, the Sorcerer.* — Magianism was now [shortly before the birth of Christ] midway between its glory and its decline. For its glory we must go back to the days of Daniel, when a monarch felt it his privilege to do honor to the priest of Light . . . when the law given by the Magian, revealed by the eternal stars, was “the law of the Medes and Persians which altereth not.” For its lowest degradation we must pass over about half a century from the time [of the wise men who came to Beth-lehem] . . . till we find ourselves in Samaria, in the presence of Simon the Magian. He gave himself out for the great power of God. He prostituted such powers and knowledge as he possessed to the object of making gain. Half dupe, half impostor, in him the noble system of Light had sunk to petty charlatanism: Magianism had degenerated into Magic. — *Robertson*: Sermons, Second Series, No. 1, pp. 253, 254.

§ 131. **Simon, the Sorcerer.** The preaching of the pure gospel of Jesus Christ, and the exercise of true miraculous power, converted the Samaritans, and were sufficient to work intellectual conviction even in the case of the Magician. . . . [Many of] the Samaritans, Simon included, believed and were baptized. This is the introduction upon the stage of history of Simon Magus, whom the earliest Church writers, . . . describe as the first of those gnostic heretics who did so much in the second and third centuries to corrupt the gospel both in faith and practice. The writings of the second and third centuries are full of the achievements and evil deeds of this man Simon. . . . All Christian writers agree in setting forth that after the reproof which, as we shall see, Simon Peter the Apostle bestowed upon the magician, he became a determined opponent of the Apostles, especially of St. Peter, whose work he endeavoured everywhere to oppose and defeat. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, pp. 355, 356.

THE VISIT OF PETER AND JOHN TO SAMARIA.

§ 132. **Race Antipathies Removed through the Gospel.** The tidings came to the Twelve as a proof that the limitation which had at first excluded Samaria from the range of their work as preachers of the kingdom had now passed away, and that the time had now come when they were to be "witnesses" to Christ in Samaria as well as in Judæa. Old antipathies of race and worship disappeared, and without hesitation they sent the two who were, in many respects, the chief of the Apostles, to sanction the admission of the new converts. The Apostle who in his zeal had once sought to call down the fire of the wrath of God on the village of the Samaritans, was now to bring to them that baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire which spoke not of wrath but of love. That his companion should be Peter, was natural, both from the position which the latter occupied as the leader of the apostolic company and from the friendship by which the two had been throughout their life united. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 134a.

§ 133. **The Gift of the Holy Ghost.** How could the Samaritans be converted and baptized without the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit? The answer is that this phrase is never used in the N. T. of that gift of the Holy Ghost which is promised to *all* on condition of repentance and baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, and which is the indispensable condition of entering into the kingdom of God. It always signifies the fulfillment, in a special manner, of Christ's promise to the Twelve, 'Ye shall receive *power* after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and always an impartation of such a special presence of the Holy Ghost as is accompanied with supernatural gifts. Here the clear implication of vs. 18 is that the gift of the Holy Ghost described was accompanied by phenomena that were visible to a purely worldly and selfish nature like that of Simon; in ch. 10: 44-46, the bestowal of the Holy Ghost was accompanied by speaking with tongues; in ch. 11: 15, Peter characterizes it as a peculiar gift. . . . The declaration, then, is not that the Samaritans had not been spiritually quickened by the presence and power of the Spirit of God, but that no miraculous power had been imparted to them, manifested in visible signs. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 98.

§ 134. **Simon's Request and Peter's Rebuke.** The character of the man is shown by what he asks for. He does not desire the Holy Ghost for himself as a spiritual gift to seal his baptism, but that he may be able to bestow, what he looks upon as a higher power than his own magic, upon others. We can learn from this narrative that the gift of the Holy Ghost has been made apparent by

the new powers conferred on those who received it. Their works and words Simon had seen and heard, and hence his application to the Apostles. . . .

It is clear from what follows that this terrible invocation of doom upon this offender is to be qualified by the condition supplied from vs. 22, where repentance and prayer are pointed out as means whereby even so great a sinner may find forgiveness. And St. Peter may have thus joined Simon in the same destruction as his money, because he foresaw that there was little or no hope that such a man could be brought to repentance unless the consequence of his sin were set before him in all its terror. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 101.

§ 135. **Simon's Final Request.** There is something eminently characteristic in the sorcerer's words. (1) His conscience reads "between the lines" of St. Peter's address what was not actually found there. That "if perhaps" is to him as the knell of doom. (2) He prays not for deliverance from "the bond of iniquity," but only from the vague terror of a future penalty. (3) He turns, not, as Peter had bidden him, to the Lord who was ready to forgive, but to a human mediator. Peter must pray for him who has not faith to pray for himself. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 137a.

THE CONVERSION OF THE ETHIOPIAN EUNUCH.

§ 136. **Jewish Proselytes.** (1) *Worshippers and Proselytes.* — To almost every one of the Jewish communities of the dispersion there was attached a following of "God-fearing" Gentiles who adopted the Jewish (*i. e.* the monotheistic and imageless) mode of worship, attended the Jewish synagogues, but who, in the observance of the ceremonial law, restricted themselves to certain leading points, and so were regarded as outside the fellowship of the Jewish communities. It is God-fearing Gentiles of this description that are undoubtedly to be understood by those who "feared God" or "worshiped God," so often mentioned in Josephus, and above all in the Acts of the Apostles. . . . From these we must now distinguish the "strangers" or "proselytes," strictly so called. For with these latter expressions . . . Judaism meant to designate those Gentiles who, through circumcision and the observance of the law, became completely incorporated with the Jewish people. — *Schürer*: Jewish People, 2d Div., vol. ii, pp. 314, 315.

(2) *"Proselytes of the Gate," and "Proselytes of Righteousness."* — This distinction was unknown until long after New Testament times. "Strangers" or "proselytes" who observed the whole law, were called by the later Rabbis "righteous strangers" or "proselytes of righteousness." It is commonly supposed that those who merely "feared God," like Cornelius (Acts 10: 2), or who "worshiped God," like Titus Justus (Acts 18: 7), were identical with those whom the Rabbis afterwards called "proselytes of the gate," but this is not correct. They had nothing whatever to do with each other. The former denoted those who, as seen above (1), had renounced Paganism and had adopted the monotheistic Jewish faith; the latter, the "proselytes of the gate," denoted Gentiles who had taken up a permanent abode in the land of Israel, without adopting the Jewish faith. The phrase "proselyte of the gate" corresponded exactly to the Old Testament designation "stranger," or "stranger within thy gates" (Ex. 20: 10; Deut. 14: 21; 24: 14). — *Editor*. (Compare *Schürer*: Jewish People, 2d Div., vol. ii, pp. 316-319.)

§ 137. **The Ethiopian Eunuch.** In its largest sense the term Ethiopia was applied to all the African lands south of Egypt; more definitely, it included the modern Nubia, Senaar, Kordofan, and part of Abyssinia. Its inhabitants were black in color and large in stature. Their land appears to have been one of

wealth, and to have maintained some commercial relations with Palestine. The Hebrew equivalent for Ethiopia is Cush, and by this name it is designated in Genesis. Some have supposed that this Ethiopian was a Jew who lived in Ethiopia; more probably he was a heathen converted to Judaism. That he was Jewish in his religious faith is evident from the fact that he came to Jerusalem to worship. . . . He must then have been a believer in the God of Israel, and presumptively a proselyte, who had publicly accepted the Hebrew religion. His journey, his study of Scripture, and his readiness to receive the Gospel, all indicate a man of genuine religious spirit and purpose. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 101*b*, 102.

§ 138. **Queen Candace: Her Mention here an Illustration of the Accuracy of the Narrative.** The African queen may have learned, too, as Darius did, to trust his Jewish faith and depend upon a man whose conduct was regulated by Divine law and principle. . . . This eunuch was treasurer of Candace, Queen of the Ethiopians. Here again we find another illustration of the historical and geographical accuracy of the Acts of the Apostles. We learn from several contemporary geographers that the kingdom of Meroë in Central Africa was ruled for centuries by a line of female sovereigns whose common title was Candace, as Pharaoh was that of the Egyptian monarchs. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. i, p. 412.

§ 139. **The Conversion of the Eunuch: His Mind Prepared for the Truth.** It is still a custom among the Orientals, when reading privately, to read audibly, although they have no particular intention of being heard by others. It was common for the Jews to be occupied in this way, especially when they were travelling. It is not improbable that the eunuch had heard, at Jerusalem, of the death of Jesus, and of the wonderful events connected with it, of his claim to be the Messiah, and the existence of a numerous party who acknowledged him in that character. Hence he may have been examining the prophecies at the time that Philip approached him, with reference to the question how far they had been accomplished in the history of the person concerning whom such reports had reached him. The extraordinary means which God employed to bring the Ethiopian to a knowledge of the gospel, and the readiness with which he embraced it, authorise the belief, that in this way, or some other, his mind had been specially prepared for the reception of the truth. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 119.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 140. **The Blessings of Adversity.** Perhaps the disciples in Jerusalem in the enjoyment of peace and popular favor had grown contented to remain at ease, instead of carrying out their Lord's command (Acts 1:8). Persecution drove them out of Jerusalem, but it led to a great increase in their number. It seemed a terrible blow, but it was the open gateway through which the church passed into the second great stage in its history. God's power to bring good out of evil may be one of our greatest comforts in adversity.

§ 141. **"One Soweth, and Another Reapeth."** The Samaritans responded so quickly to the simple words of Jesus that, though he wrought no miracles there, yet he could speak at once of "the whitening harvest." This was reaped by Philip. But both alike rejoiced in the results.

§ 142. **Intellectual Faith, and Saving Faith.** Simon Magus believed, so did the demons (Jas. 2:19); but a mere intellectual assent to spiritual truth has no more power to change character than has a belief in the multiplication table. Saving faith yields in addition to this a complete submission of the heart and life to the truth, as in the case of the Ethiopian eunuch.

§ 143. The Punishment of Simon Compared with that of Ananias. "We may account for the difference of treatment by considering, that Simon, in whom we must suppose a mixture of deceit and superstition, had not yet experienced the Holy Ghost in his heart, and did not really know what he was doing; whereas Ananias exhibited the height of conscious hypocrisy and selfishness, amidst the virgin purity and glowing love of the primitive church." — *Schaff*.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE GROWTH OF THE CHURCH IN PALESTINE: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 33-35. 2. SEVERITY OF THE PERSECUTION: *Stalker*, Life of St. Paul, pp. 39, 40. 3. SAUL'S PART IN THE PERSECUTION: *Ibid.*, pp. 35-37; *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 97-99; *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 78, 79. 4. THE ASSUMED CONVERSION OF SIMON MAGUS: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 169-171. 5. PETER AND SIMON MAGUS: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 385-397. 6. PHILIP, AND THE ANGELIC GUIDANCE: *Ibid.*, pp. 403-408.

Lesson 8.—THE CONVERSION OF SAUL. An Apostle to the Gentiles Called.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 144. Design of the Lesson. To gather together the accessible facts respecting Saul's life before his conversion, and to learn what we can respecting that supreme event in his life which changed Saul the persecutor into Paul the apostle.

§ 145. Preparing and Teaching the Lesson. (1) Draw attention to the fact that when Saul first appears in Luke's narrative (Acts 7: 58) he was probably thirty or thirty-five years of age, and that for the main facts respecting his previous life we are dependent on incidental allusions in his addresses and epistles.

(2) Picture Saul's boyhood in Tarsus, in a home which owing to his father's social position was probably a center of much culture and refinement; notice his strict religious training in the home and in the synagogue school; his early love for the religion of his fathers, and his abhorrence of the vices and wickedness practiced by the heathen on all sides of him.

(3) Follow him to Jerusalem where he enters the school of the famous teacher Gamaliel, and becomes a diligent student of the Hebrew Scriptures and of the learned comments of the Jewish Rabbis. He imbibed here Gamaliel's zeal for the law, but apparently very little of his moderation.

(4) Take particular notice of Saul's strenuous efforts during the time before his conversion to build up a righteousness of his own that should merit God's favor, and bring peace to his conscience. In respect to the law he was blameless, in passionate zeal for his ancestral religion he outstripped his fellows, and became a persecutor of the church, because he thought that thereby he was serving God.

(5) Call attention to the stupendous change in his character which took place

when Jesus appeared to him; how the elaborate system of self-righteousness which he had built up with such extraordinary pains was destroyed at once, to give place to an unflinching faith in Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God and the long-expected Messiah.

(6) Note, finally, how this revelation that all his past life had been a mistake — a fighting against God instead of for him — so overwhelmed him that, blinded and stunned, he needed and, through Ananias, received a still further revelation from the Lord, and the gift of the Holy Spirit, before he was ready to enter upon the open confession of his new faith.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

SAUL'S LIFE BEFORE HIS CONVERSION.

§ 146. **Tarsus, the Birthplace of Saul.** Tarsus ranked among the first cities of the world. It was one of the busiest mercantile ports of the Mediterranean; while in scholarship and the fine arts it was excelled only by Alexandria and Athens. Here were schools to which young men from all parts of the world came to complete their education. . . . The language of the cultivated classes was Greek, — a language which nearly all the inhabitants understood, though some retained their native dialect. There were also many Jews and persons of Jewish descent who in their homes and places of worship and private schools used the Aramaic and the ancient Hebrew. There was a variety of religions or forms of worship. Most of the people were ready to adopt the forms prescribed by the Roman government; but some maintained their devotion to the deities of Greece, while others clung to the traditional religion of Assyria. The Jewish residents, however, held tenaciously to their own faith and form of worship. They read their scriptures and taught them to their children; they met in their synagogues on the sabbath and worshipped with their faces toward Jerusalem. It was in such a city, among such a people that . . . Saul was born. — *Taylor* : *Life of Paul*, pp. 17-19.

§ 147. **Influence of Tarsus upon Saul's Life and Character.** In studying the character and life of Paul it is of the utmost importance to remember that he grew up in the atmosphere of a great and busy city, for it greatly influenced him in many ways. His cosmopolitan culture he owed to the influence of his training and surroundings in Tarsus. It was always easy for him to associate with all classes, with the cultured and refined as well as with the common people. . . . In his letters, his politeness and thoughtfulness for others are everywhere apparent. . . . It is impossible not to see a great difference between him and the Twelve in this respect, and this is due largely to the fact that he was a child of the city, while they were of the country. — *Thatcher* : *Apostolic Church*, p. 90.

§ 148. **Social Position of Saul's Family.** From the excellent education which the sire bestowed on his son, and the noble principles instilled into him, we cannot doubt that the father of Saul was a person of gentle extraction and accustomed to move in the very highest grades of society. — *Lewin* : *St. Paul*, vol. i, p. 2.

§ 149. **Citizenship and Family.** Although a Jew he was a Roman citizen; that is, he had all the rights which an inhabitant of Rome possessed. We do not

know how his father obtained this right, whether by service or by purchase. Of his family we know almost nothing. He had a sister who lived at Jerusalem; or, at least, her son was there. His parents were of the tribe of Benjamin, and although living among the heathen, seem to have remained Jews of the strictest sort. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 92.

§ 150. Religious Influences. (1) *Toward Pharisaism*. — More than once Paul speaks of his early life and training, and always emphasizes the fact that he had been brought up in accordance with the strictest rules of Phariseeism. He was one of those Pharisees who with his whole heart endeavored to keep the law. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 92.

(2) *Away from Heathenism*. — Tarsus was the centre of a species of Baal-worship of an imposing but unspeakably degrading character, and at certain seasons of the year it was the scene of festivals, which were frequented by the whole population of the neighboring regions, and were accompanied with orgies of a degree of moral abominableness happily beyond the reach even of our imaginations. . . . He could see enough to make him turn from idolatry with the scorn peculiar to his nation, and to make him regard the little synagogue where his family worshipped the Holy One of Israel as far more glorious than the gorgeous temples of the heathen. — *Stalker*: St. Paul, pp. 24, 25.

§ 151. Education in Tarsus. His education was conducted at home rather than at school; for, though Tarsus was celebrated for its learning, the Hebrew boy would not lightly be exposed to the influence of Gentile teaching. Or, if he went to a school, it was not a Greek school, but rather to some room connected with the synagogue, where a noisy class of Jewish children received the rudiments of instruction, seated on the ground with their teacher, after the manner of Mahomedan children in the East, who may be seen or heard at their lessons near the mosque. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 49, 50.

§ 152. Education at the Feet of Gamaliel. It has been contended, that when St. Paul said he was "brought up" in Jerusalem, "at the feet of Gamaliel," he meant that he had lived at the Rabban's house, and eaten at his table. But the words evidently point to the customary posture of Jewish students at a school. . . . Maimonides says: — "How do the masters teach? The doctor sits at the head, and the disciples around him like a crown, that they may all see the doctor and hear his words. Nor is the doctor seated on a seat, and the disciples on the ground; but all are on seats, or all on the floor." . . . If we were briefly to specify the three effects which the teaching and example of Gamaliel may be supposed to have produced on the mind of St. Paul, they would be as follows: — candour and honesty of judgment, — a willingness to study and make use of Greek authors, — and a keen and watchful enthusiasm for the Jewish law. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 61, 58.

§ 153. Rabbinical Schools in Jerusalem. The schools at Jerusalem in the time of Gamaliel where wholly engaged in studies of the most wearisome, narrow, petty, technical kind. . . . The Talmud . . . devotes a whole treatise to washings of the hands, and another to the proper method of killing fowls. The Pharisaic section of the Jews held, indeed, that there were two hundred and forty-eight commandments and three hundred and sixty-five prohibitions involved in the Jewish Law, all of them equally binding, and all of them so searching that if only one solitary Jew could be found who for one day kept them all and transgressed in no one direction, then the captivity of God's people would cease and the Messiah would appear. . . . "If there be one thing more definitely laid down in the Law than another, it is the uncleanness of creeping things; yet the Talmud

assures us that 'no one is appointed a member of the Sanhedrin who does not possess sufficient ingenuity to prove from the written Law that a creeping thing is ceremonially clean'; and that there was an unimpeachable disciple at Jabne who could adduce one hundred and fifty arguments in favour of the ceremonial cleanness of creeping things. Sophistry like this was at work even in the days when the young student of Tarsus sat at the feet of Gamaliel; and can we imagine any period of his life when he would not have been wearied by a system at once so meaningless, so stringent, and so insincere?" — *Stokes: Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 15, 17.

§ 154. **Saul's Trade, and his Residence after Completing his Studies.** It was customary for every Rabbi to learn a trade, for according to the law they were not allowed to receive pay for their advice and instruction. But there were many ways of evading this, and probably very few Rabbis actually lived from the income of their trade. Paul had already learned the trade which was so common in his own home, that of weaving coarse cloth of the long wool of the Cilician goats and cutting it into the necessary patterns for tents. How long he was in Jerusalem it is impossible to tell. We do not know whether he left Jerusalem after completing his studies and went as a young Rabbi to Tarsus, or to some other city. He may have remained in Jerusalem, perhaps, as Rabbi in the synagogue "of them of Cilicia and Asia." . . . Tarsus was in Cilicia, and it is quite natural that Paul should be connected with that synagogue. — *Thatcher: Apostolic Church*, pp. 95, 102.

§ 155. **Personal Characteristics.** (1) *Personal Appearance.* — As to his personal appearance, we are left to indirect statements and inferences. . . . He was probably small of stature, for his opponents in Corinth said that he could write blustering, threatening letters, as if he were able to do great things, but his bodily presence was weak and insignificant. At Lystra, where the enthusiastic inhabitants were going to pay divine honors to him and Barnabas, he was called Hermes, while Barnabas was called Zeus. In all works of art, Zeus is represented as of large stature and with a heavy beard, while Hermes is small and beardless. In the Acts of Paul and Thecla, the first Christian romance, written about 150 A.D., there is a description of Paul which is probably based on a true tradition. In this he is described as "a man small in size, bald-headed, bandy-legged, well-built, with eyebrows meeting, rather long-nosed, and with motions full of grace."

In Galatians, and especially in his letters to the Corinthians, there is much said about his sufferings and infirmities. A sigh as of bodily pain and sickness seems to be heard through them all. His body was marked by rods and scourges and racked by persecutions, and his health was broken by the many hardships which he had experienced. He must have had a strong body and great vigor of constitution to endure all the violence that had been done him. — *Thatcher: Apostolic Church*, pp. 96, 97.

(2) *The "Thorn in the Flesh."* — Traces of its permanent effect [his temporary blindness at Damascus] on his powers of sight have been found in his habit of dictating rather than writing letters, in the large characters traced by him when he did write, in his not recognising the high priest who commanded him to be struck. Of the many theories as to the mysterious "thorn in the flesh," there seems most reason for accepting that which connects it with some affection of the eyes, involving, perhaps, attacks of agonizing pain. On this assumption, the eager wish of the Galatians, if it had been possible, to have plucked out their own eyes and given them to him, receives a special and interesting significance. — *Plumptre: In Handy Commentary, Acts*, p. 153b.

THE CONVERSION OF SAUL.

§ 156. **Saul, the Persecutor.** Here we have a picture of St. Paul in his unconverted state: "Saul, yet breathing threatening and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord." . . . He shut up in prison many of the saints, both men and women, and that in Jerusalem before he went to Damascus at all. He scourged the disciples in every synagogue. . . . He voted for the execution of the disciples. . . . And lastly followed the disciples and persecuted them in foreign cities. . . . He strove . . . to compel the disciples to blaspheme the name of Christ in the same manner as the Romans were subsequently wont to test Christians by calling upon them to cry anathema to the name of their Master. . . . When we thus strive to realise the facts of the case, we shall see that the scenes of blood and torture and death, the ruined homes, the tears, the heartbreaking separations which the young man Saul had caused in his blind zeal for the law, and which are briefly summed up in the words "he made havock of the Church," were quite sufficient to account for that profound impression of his own unworthiness and of God's great mercy towards him which he ever cherished to his dying day. — *Stokes* : Acts, vol. ii, pp. 24, 26–28.

§ 157. **External Features of Saul's Conversion.** (1) *His Mission to Damascus.* — On the road to Damascus through the burning desert sand, a young Pharisee with his companions is journeying along; far beyond others of his own years and party, he is held in high esteem for his zeal for the ancestral precepts, and he surpasses all in his bitter enmity to the sect of the Nazarenes. Endowed with authority from the Sanhedrin, he purposes by energetic measures against the confessors of the Crucified One to crush the Messianic agitation which has started up afresh even in the Dispersion. — *Weiss* : Life of Christ, vol. iii, p. 410.

(2) *The Vision at Midday.* — Nearer and nearer however he drew. . . . Suddenly at midday, as Paul and his company were riding forward beneath the blaze of the Syrian sun, a light which dimmed even that fierce glare shone round about them, a shock vibrated through the atmosphere, and in a moment they found themselves prostrate upon the ground. The rest was for Paul alone: a voice sounded in his ears, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me?" and as he looked up and asked the radiant Figure that had spoken, "Who art thou, Lord?" the answer was, "I am Jesus, whom thou art persecuting." — *Stalker* : St. Paul, p. 43.

(3) *The Revelation to Saul of Jesus of Nazareth.* — Here, however, we note the expressive fact that the very name by which the future apostle was addressed by the Lord was Hebrew. . . . The Lord appeals to the very foundations of his religious life, and throws him back upon the thought and manifestation of God as revealed of old time to His greatest leader and champion under the old covenant, to Moses in the bush. . . . Saul asks who is speaking to him, and the answer is not, The Eternal Word who is from everlasting, the Son of the Infinite One who ruleth in the heavens. Saul would have acknowledged at once that his efforts were not aimed at Him. But the speaker cuts right across the line of Saul's prejudices and feelings, for He says, "I am Jesus of Nazareth," whom you hate so intensely and against whom all your efforts are aimed, emphasizing those points against which his Pharisaic prejudices must have most of all revolted. . . . Saul of Tarsus was converted outside the city, but the work was only begun there. — *Stokes* : Acts, vol. ii, pp. 45, 46, 48.

§ 158. **Internal Conditions Preceding Saul's Conversion: Two Views.**

(1) *Not Preceded by an Inward Preparation.* — The conversion of Saul does not appear, on an accurate consideration of the three narratives, which agree in the main points, to have had the way psychologically prepared for it by scruples of conscience as to his persecuting proceedings. On the contrary, Luke represents it

in the history at our passage, and Paul himself in his speeches, as in direct and immediate *contrast* to his vehement persecuting zeal, amidst which he was *all of a sudden* internally arrested by the miraculous fact from without. . . . For the transformation of his . . . ardent interest against the gospel into an ardent zeal for it, there was needed . . . a heavenly power directly seizing on his inmost conscience; and this he experienced, in the midst of his zealot enterprise, on the way to Damascus, when that perverted striving after righteousness and merit was annihilated. — *Meyer* : Commentary, Acts, p. 183.

(2) *Preceded by an Inward Preparation.* — There must have been a considerable period during which he was halting and doubting [Acts 26: 14]. Whatever the nature of the event that happened on the way to Damascus, . . . the turning-point in his career merely marks the logical result of increasing dissatisfaction with himself and his course as a Pharisee, and of deepening impressions concerning the truth of Christianity. . . . It is a psychological impossibility that his conversion should have been due to external causes alone, and should have had no internal point of contact with the course of his previous life up to the moment of its occurrence. It is inconceivable that an external miracle alone should have transformed a man of Saul's fiery temper and firmness of conviction from a Pharisee into a Christian, if indeed such a miracle can in any case be conceived of as by itself effecting an inner spiritual revolution. — *Stevens* : Pauline Theology, pp. 4-6.

THE MINISTRY OF ANANIAS TO SAUL.

§ 159. *The Sending of Ananias to Saul.* The manner in which Ananias is here introduced, distinctly implies that, previously, he and Saul had not been personally acquainted with each other; it appears, at least, from vs. 13, that Ananias knew Saul only by report. . . . He is directed to go forth, and to proceed to a certain street, to enter a certain house, and there seek Saul, who is exactly described to him, and is engaged in prayer. . . . The Lord informs Ananias of the reason for selecting and sending *him* precisely at *that* time to Saul — because the latter was, at that moment, engaged in prayer, and, . . . because Saul had already seen, in a vision, a man named Ananias coming in and putting his hand on him. — *Lechler* : In Lange's Commentary, Acts, pp. 168, 169*b*.

§ 160. *The Interview between Ananias and Saul.* The good Ananias hesitated no longer. He entered into the house of Judas, and while his very presence seemed to breathe peace, he addressed the sufferer by the dear title of brother, and laying his hands upon the clouded eyes, bade him rise, and see, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. "Be baptized," he added, "and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." The words of blessing and trust were to the troubled nerves and aching heart of the sufferer a healing in themselves. Immediately "there fell from his eyes as it had been scales." He rose, and saw, and took food and was strengthened, and . . . was admitted into the full privileges of the new faith. He became a member of the Church of Christ, the extirpation of which had been for months the most passionate desire and the most active purpose of his life. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, pp. 113, 114.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 161. *No Salvation Possible through Law.* If Saul with all his inborn religiousness, with his careful training, with his scrupulous regard for the law, with his extraordinary efforts to win the favor of God by his personal righteousness, yet failed utterly and wretchedly, does it not suggest that salvation along this line is unattainable by any man?

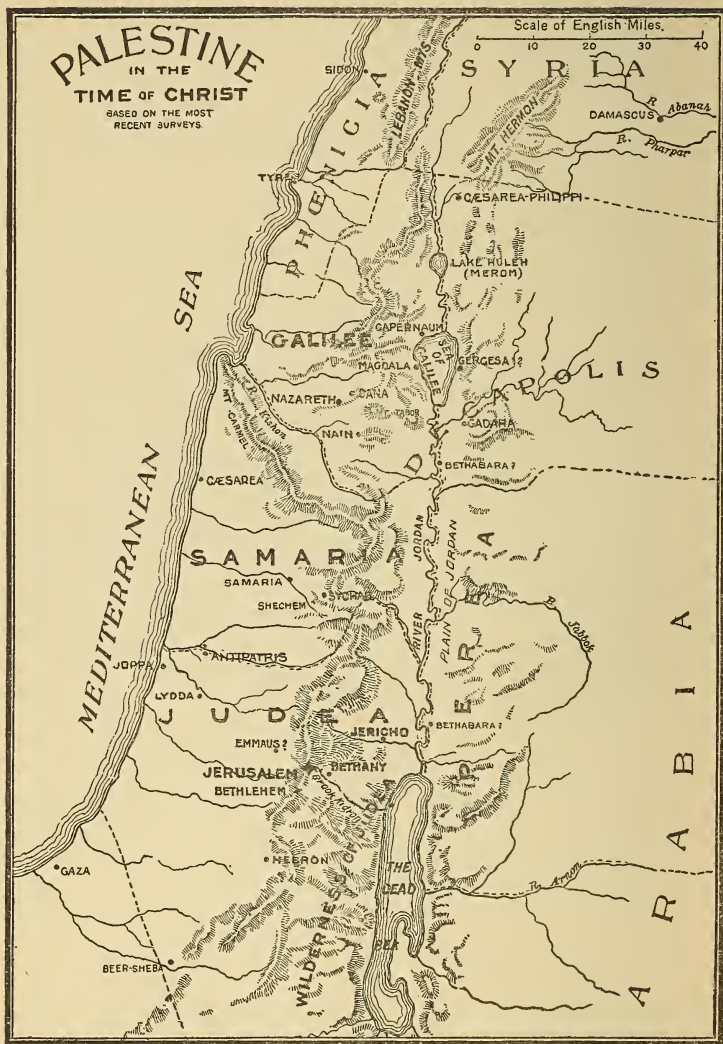
§ 162. **God's Method of Saving Men.** Over against this laborious and utterly futile attempt on man's part to climb into heaven on the ladder of his own righteousness is God's way of saving men, which consists in his stooping down to sinful man and through this grace in Christ Jesus our Lord lifting up into holiness and into fellowship with himself every one who, in penitence and faith, accepts his proffered aid.

§ 163. **The Essential Facts in Conversion.** External circumstances and inward experiences may differ endlessly, but in every genuine conversion the essential facts are the same — the sinner must be conscious of his need of help, and he must by faith cast himself just as he is upon the help that comes to him from God through Christ.

§ 164. **Sinning through Ignorance, and Sinning against Light.** Saul obtained mercy, as he says, because he sinned ignorantly and in unbelief. But the mercy of God extends also to him who has sinned against the light that God has given him. It is limited only by man's impenitence and want of faith. The "whosoever" in Jo. 3: 16 applies to every man.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE LANGUAGE OF SAUL'S INFANCY: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 38-40. 2. SAUL'S BOYHOOD IN A HELLENIST CITY: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, ch. 2; *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 49-51. 3. THE SCHOOL AND THE SYNAGOGUE: *Schiirer*, Jewish People in the Time of Christ, 2d Div., vol. ii, pp. 44-89; *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, ch. 3. 4. SAUL'S DOMESTIC RELATIONS: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 44-46. 5. LIFE UNDER THE LAW: *Schiirer*, Jewish People in the Time of Christ, 2d Div., vol. ii, pp. 90-125. 6. SAUL'S UNCONSCIOUS PREPARATION FOR HIS WORK: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 19-37. 7. "KICKING AGAINST THE GOAD": *Stalker*, Life of St. Paul, pp. 40-42; *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 101-107. 8. ROADS FROM JERUSALEM TO DAMASCUS: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 83-88. 9. THE CRISIS IN SAUL'S LIFE: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 107-114. 10. HAD SAUL MET JESUS DURING HIS MINISTRY? *Ibid.*, pp. 41-44. 11. EFFECT OF SAUL'S CONVERSION ON HIS THINKING: *Stalker*, Life of St. Paul, pp. 44-47. 12. ITS EFFECT ON HIS DESTINY: *Ibid.*, pp. 47, 48. 13. THE CONVERSION OF SAUL AS AN EVIDENCE OF CHRISTIANITY: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 114, 115.



NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 9. — SAUL'S PREPARATION FOR HIS FUTURE WORK.
His Experiences in Damascus, Arabia, Judea, Syria,
and Cilicia.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 165. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Saul by his experience in Damascus and Jerusalem, by his intervening retirement into the solitudes of Arabia for reflection, and by his evangelistic labors in Syria and Cilicia was prepared for his future work among the Gentiles.

§ 166. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note at the outset that we have no connected history of this portion of Saul's life, but that a fairly comprehensive survey is attainable by piecing together the scattered historical material in the Acts and in Paul's epistles.

(2) Speak of Saul's natural impulse after his conversion to make known the great change that had been wrought in him, as well as the revelation that had been given to him, and yet how quickly it must have become apparent to him that he was not yet qualified to engage permanently in this work.

(3) Consider at what point in Luke's narrative the sojourn in Arabia must be inserted, and the reasons for placing it between verses 22 and 23. Point out the need of this retirement, the nature of the divine training experienced by Saul, and its tendency to make him independent of human instruction.

(4) Show how the results of this retirement became apparent on his return to Damascus (Acts 9: 27), and in his preaching to the Hellenists in Jerusalem (vs. 29); and how at the same time in both these places his experiences became prophetic of his subsequent life of peril and suffering for the sake of the gospel.

(5) Call attention to the open-hearted hospitality of Peter in taking to his heart and into his home this former persecutor; conceive, if possible, something of the intense interest with which Peter probably related, and Saul listened to, the story of the earthly ministry of Jesus.

(6) Show, finally, how Saul's experiences in Syria and Cilicia gave him a practical training in preaching and planting churches, thus completing the preparation needed for his future work.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 167. **The Probable Sequence in Paul's Journeyings.** Paul, immediately after his conversion, spent a few days with the disciples at Damascus, preaching Christ in the synagogues of the Jews (Acts 9: 19-22). Soon afterwards, urged by an internal impulse, he went to Arabia, where he spent two or three years in retirement, preparing himself for his great mission (Gal. 1: 15-17). Then he returned to Damascus, and spent some time longer there preaching the gospel (Acts 9: 23). Afterwards, in consequence of a plot of the Jews against his life, he effected his escape, and betook himself to Jerusalem (vss. 24, 25). It is probable that the greater part of the three years was spent not in Damascus, but in Arabia; for it is to his residence in Arabia that Paul himself gives the greater prominence. Damascus is only incidentally mentioned by him. This also . . . bests accounts for the cold reception which he received from the disciples in Jerusalem. . . . Paul, in Arabia, was not an evangelist, but a student of theology; not a dispenser, but a receiver of revelations. He who formerly at Jerusalem sat at the feet of Gamaliel, in Arabia sat as a student at the feet of Jesus; and the Acts records not his studies, but his labors: it relates public events which are history, not private events which are biography.— *Glogag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. i, pp. 340, 341.

SAUL'S EXPERIENCES IN DAMASCUS, AND HIS RETIREMENT INTO ARABIA.

§ 168. **Saul's First Preaching in Damascus.** At once we find him, where Stephen was a few months before, in the synagogues preaching to his own people, the Jews; and this is his theme, as it was with all the apostles, "Jesus, the Son of God, died for our sins and rose from the dead." How those Jews at Damascus must have wondered,—they who had never had a thought or experienced a heart-throb outside the narrow limits of their law and tradition, and who had looked upon Saul as one like themselves; how amazed they must have been to see the flame burst from a heart which they supposed was as cold as their own, toward all new things in religion! At first they would not know what it meant. Might not this be some stealthy masquerade, by which cunning Saul would draw the Christians about him only to destroy them the more easily? No,—that cannot be. He is too intensely in earnest. He must mean what he says. They see the man they had expected to be their champion transformed into a stronger and more positive Christian than any they had ever met before.

But Saul's preaching in Damascus at this time could not have continued very long. Only for a little while did he bear testimony to the fact that he had become a follower of the Lord Jesus; for he is not ready yet to enter upon the work of an apostle.— *Taylor*: Life of Paul, pp. 54, 55.

§ 169. **Saul's Preparation in Arabia for his Future Work.** The Lord led Saul there [to Arabia] for the purpose of quiet and retirement. . . . When God would prepare Moses for his life's work in shepherding, ruling, and guiding His people through the deserts of Arabia, He first called him for many a long day into retirement to the Mount of Horeb and the solitudes of the Sinaitic desert. When God would strengthen and console the spirit depressed, wounded and severely smitten, of his servant Elijah, He brought him to the same mysterious spot. . . .

The Lord thus taught St. Paul, and through him teaches the Church of every age, the need of seasons of retirement and communion with God preparatory to and in close connexion with any great work or scene of external activity, such as

St. Paul was now entering upon. . . . The world was perishing and men were going down to the grave in darkness and Satan and sin were triumphing, and yet Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness for forty days, and Saul was brought out into the deserts of Arabia from amid the teeming crowds of Damascus that he might learn those secrets of the Divine life which are best communicated to those who wait upon God in patient prayer and holy retirement. This is a lesson very necessary for this hot and fitful and feverish age of ours, when men are in such a hurry to have everything set right and every abuse destroyed all at once. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 85, 86.

§ 170. **The Discipline of Solitude.** When a man has been suddenly converted, as Paul was, he is generally driven by a strong impulse to make known what has happened to him. . . . But we learn from his own writings that there was another powerful impulse influencing him at the same time. . . . This other impulse was the wish to retreat into solitude and think out the meaning and issues of that which had befallen him. It cannot be wondered at that he felt this to be a necessity. He had believed his former creed intensely and staked everything on it; to see it suddenly shattered in pieces must have shaken him severely. The new truth which had been flashed upon him was so far-reaching and revolutionary that it could not be taken in at once in all its bearings. Paul was a born thinker; it was not enough for him to experience anything; he required to comprehend it and fit it into the structure of his convictions. Immediately, therefore, after his conversion he went away, he tells us, into Arabia. . . . When he returned to mankind he was in possession of that view of Christianity which was peculiar to himself and formed the burden of his preaching during the subsequent years. — *Stalker*: St. Paul, pp. 51, 52.

§ 171. **Saul's Return from Damascus and Escape from the Same.** From his conversion to his final departure from Damascus, is said to have been "three years." . . . Meantime Saul had "returned to Damascus, preaching boldly in the name of Jesus." The Jews, being no longer able to meet him in controversy, resorted to that which is the last argument of a desperate cause: they resolved to assassinate him. Saul became acquainted with the conspiracy; and all due precautions were taken to evade the danger. But the political circumstances of Damascus at the time made escape very difficult. Either in the course of the hostilities which prevailed along the Syrian frontiers between Herod Antipas and the Romans, on one side, and Aretas, King of Petra, on the other, — and possibly in consequence of that absence of Vitellius, which was caused by the emperor's death, — the Arabian monarch had made himself master of Damascus, and the Jews, who sympathised with Aretas, were high in the favour of his officer, the Ethnarch. Or Tiberius had ceased to reign, and his successor had assigned Damascus to the King of Petra, and the Jews had gained over his officer and his soldiers, as Pilate's soldiers had once been gained over at Jerusalem. St. Paul at least expressly informs us, that "the Ethnarch kept watch over the city, with a garrison, purporting to apprehend him." St. Luke says, that the Jews "watched the city-gates day and night, with the intention of killing him." The Jews furnished the motive, the Ethnarch the military force. The anxiety of the "disciples" was doubtless great, . . . [and] became the instrument of his safety. From an unguarded part of the wall, in the darkness of the night, probably where some overhanging houses, . . . opened upon the outer country, they let him down from a window in a basket. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 99, 100.

§ 172. **Aretas and Paul; the Narrative Confirmed.** The whole story of Aretas and his connection with Paul was for a long time questioned, but with-

out sufficient grounds. For the latest researches have shown that there is really nothing known that can be urged against the truthfulness of the narrative. Aretas IV. was king of Arabia Nabatæa, whose capital was Petra. His kingdom included a large part of the Sinaitic peninsula, and extended far up on the east side of the Jordan. He was a warlike man, a skillful general, and an able ruler. It is impossible to say just when he got control of Damascus, as we have no exact information about it. But it is a very significant fact that the coins of Damascus from the year 33 A.D. to 63 A.D. do not bear the image of the Roman Emperor. But before 33, and after 63, they again appear bearing the Emperor's likeness. This fact shows conclusively that during this period the city did not owe allegiance directly to the Emperor, but was under some other ruler. So that it is possible that Aretas IV. had control of Damascus during this whole period. — *Thatcher* : Apostolic Church, p. 112.

§ 173. **Saul's Flight to Jerusalem.** How he made his way to Jerusalem must be left to conjecture. Doubtless, as he stole through the dark night alone — above all, as he passed the very spot where Christ had taken hold of him, and into one moment of his life had been crowded a whole eternity — his heart would be full of thoughts too deep for words. It has been supposed, from the expression of which he makes use in his speech to Agrippa, that he may have preached in many synagogues on the days which were occupied on his journey to Jerusalem. But this seems inconsistent with his own statement that he was "unknown by face to the churches of Judæa which were in Christ." It is not, however, unlikely that he may sometimes have availed himself of the guest-chambers which were attached to the Jewish synagogues; and if such was the case, he might have taught the first truths of the Gospel to the Jews without being thrown into close contact with Christian communities. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, p. 128.

SAUL'S FIRST VISIT TO JERUSALEM AFTER HIS CONVERSION, AND HIS WORK IN SYRIA AND CILICIA.

§ 174. **The Object of Paul's Return to Jerusalem.** After three years had . . . expired from the time of his conversion, he resolved . . . once more to return to Jerusalem. As to the object of this journey, it follows from what Paul himself states, in his Epistle to the Galatians, that the main object at least, was not to form a connexion with the Christian church in Jerusalem, but to become personally acquainted with the apostle Peter. This does not exclude that we are told in the Acts, of his intercourse with the whole church, and his disputations with the Hellenists; only these do not form the object for undertaking the journey, but only something additional while carrying out his original design. . . . [Peter] was especially active in promoting the spread of Christianity — a sufficient reason why Paul, before entering on his public ministry, should wish to confer with him in particular. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, pp. 93-95.

§ 175. **Saul's Reception at Jerusalem.** Not without grief and awe could he look upon the city of his forefathers, over which he now knew that the judgment of God was impending. And not without sad emotions could one of so tender a nature think of the alienation of those who had once been his warmest associates. The grief of Gamaliel, the indignation of the Pharisees, the fury of the Hellenistic Synagogues, all this, he knew, was before him. The sanguine hopes, however, springing from his own honest convictions, and his fervent zeal to communicate the truth to others, predominated in his mind. He thought that they would believe as he had believed. . . . When they saw the change which had been produced in him, and heard the miraculous history he could tell them, they would not refuse to "receive his testimony."

Thus, with fervent zeal, and sanguine expectations, "he attempted to join himself to the disciples" of Christ. But, as the Jews hated him, so the Christians suspected him. His escape had been too hurried to allow of his bringing "letters of commendation." Whatever distant rumour might have reached them of an apparition on his journey, of his conduct at Damascus, of his retirement into Arabia, they could not believe that he was really a disciple. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, p. 102.

§ 176. **Saul Vouched for by Barnabas.** What, we ask, made Barnabas more ready than others, not only to receive the convert himself, but to vouch for his sincerity? The answer is found in the inference that the Levite of Cyprus and the tentmaker had been friends in earlier years. The culture of which Tarsus was the seat would naturally attract a student from the neighbouring island, and the eagerness of Barnabas to secure Saul's co-operation at a later stage of his work may fairly be looked on as furnishing a confirmation of the view now suggested. He knew enough of his friend to believe every syllable of what he told him as to the incidents of his conversion [perhaps also he had been in Damascus, and had witnessed Saul's work there]. — *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 162.

§ 177. **The Meeting of St. Peter and St. Paul.** [In Jerusalem] first Peter and Paul met and took counsel together. Kindred in spirit, though differing much in social culture and mental training, the high-born, Philosophic pupil of Gamaliel and the humble illiterate boatman of Galilee formed, even during the brief intercourse of two weeks, an ardent, life-long friendship. Little did either of them at the time imagine the grandeur of the work in which they were engaged, or the great things that they were both to do and to suffer for the sake of Him they sought to serve and honor. Still less did they suppose that their humble names would be inscribed in the heraldry of deathless fame, while the great men of their day, princes, philosophers, and priests, would be remembered chiefly because of their relations to them and their work. Scarcely had the names of Caligula, and Gamaliel, and Annas been known to-day but for their connection with these two humble great men and their mission. After a few days of wonderful and intimate friendship, the mutual explanations of personal experience, they part — Paul to go to his native city, and Peter to visit the church [in Lydda] in the vicinity of Jerusalem. — *Ormiston* : In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 198.

§ 178. **Saul's Preaching to the Hellenists at Jerusalem.** It will be remembered that it was as the leader of the Hellenistic Jews of the synagogue named in ch. 6:9 that Saul had first appeared in the history of the Church. Now, it would seem, he sought to undo the evil that he had then wrought, by preaching to them the faith which he had then opposed, and presenting, we may well believe, the very aspects of the truth that had been most prominent in Stephen's teaching, and which, therefore, now, as then, roused them to a passionate frenzy. — *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 163a.

§ 179. **Saul Compelled to Flee to Tarsus.** The same fury which had caused the murder of Stephen, now brought the murderer of Stephen to the verge of assassination. Once more, as at Damascus, the Jews made a conspiracy to put Saul to death: and once more he was rescued by the anxiety of the brethren. Reluctantly, and not without a direct intimation from on high, he retired from the work of preaching the Gospel in Jerusalem. . . .

They brought him down to Cæsarea by the sea, and from Cæsarea they sent him to Tarsus. His own expression in the Epistle to the Galatians is that he went "into the regions of Syria and Cilicia." From this it has been inferred that he

went first from Cæsarea to Antioch, and then from Antioch to Tarsus. And such a course would have been perfectly natural; for the communication of the city of Cæsar and the Herods with the metropolis of Syria, either by sea and the harbour of Seleucia, or by the great coast-road through Tyre and Sidon, was easy and frequent. But the supposition is unnecessary. In consequence of the range of Mount Taurus, Cilicia has a greater geographical affinity with Syria than with Asia Minor. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 103, 104.

§ 180. **Saul's Evangelistic Work in Syria and Cilicia.** In these regions of Syria and Cilicia, Paul remained four or five years. . . . That he was occupied during this time in labouring for the spread of the gospel, is not only to be inferred from the character of the man, but is expressly stated in Gal. 1:21-23. Further, in the sequel of the narrative, we find churches existing here, the origin of which is unknown, unless we suppose that they were planted by Paul's instrumentality at this time. It is not an irrelevant reflection, which Mr. Howson suggests, that during this residence of Paul in his native land "some of those Christian 'kinsmen,' whose names are handed down to us, possibly his sister, the playmate of his childhood, and his sister's son, who afterwards saved his life, may have been gathered by his exertions into the fold of Christ." — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 131.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 181. **The Impulse to Testify of Conversion.** Conversion means a change from darkness to light, from sin to righteousness, and from condemnation to peace. A change so great brings such joy that the tongue is often forced to utter the gladness which the heart feels, and to speak of that divine goodness and power through which the change has been wrought.

§ 182. **Preparation for the Work of Life.** The greater the work the greater the needed preparation. Those who will not take time to acquire thorough equipment must be content to do commonplace work. Though Saul was already thirty years of age or more, and possessed the amplest scholastic culture, yet before God permitted him to go forth to his life-work among the perishing Gentiles he withdrew him for seven or more years for further preparatory training. When he finally began his distinctive work, he quickly took the place for which God had prepared him, — as the Apostle of the Gentiles and the advocate of Christian liberty.

§ 183. **Making God's Message Our Own.** Saul not only received a great message from God, but by meditation and prayer he made it his own, and then he threw all the powers of his body, mind and soul into it. Let us find out what God wants us to do, how best to do it, and then do it with all our might.

§ 184. **Retrieving the Past.** Saul did his utmost to undo the wrong he had done to the church in Jerusalem. At the peril of his life he preached the truth for which Stephen had suffered, in the very synagogues where Stephen had preached. A genuine convert seeks not only to improve the future but to retrieve the past.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. SAUL AT DAMASCUS: *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, p. 178. 2. SAUL'S PROCLAMATION OF JESUS AS THE "SON OF GOD": *Ibid.*, p. 180*b*. 3. WHY LUKE DID NOT MENTION THE SOJOURN IN ARABIA: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. i, pp. 340, 341. 4. THE OCCUPATION OF DAMASCUS BY ARETAS: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Aretas;" *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. i, pp. 334-336. 5. WHY ARETAS SOUGHT TO CAPTURE SAUL: *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, pp. 110, 111. 6. SAUL'S RECEPTION AT JERUSALEM: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, p. 129 ff.

Lesson 10. — THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS. The Vision of Peter, and the First Gentile Converts.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 185. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Peter and the church at Jerusalem were prepared through the vision at Joppa, and the conversion of Cornelius at Cæsarea, for a new step in advance, namely, the direct admission of the Gentiles into the Christian church.

§ 186. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Call attention to the cessation of the Jewish persecution of the Christians owing to the persecution of the Jews themselves by Caligula, and to the consequent season of prosperity enjoyed by the church.

(2) Note the divine leadings by which Peter was brought to Joppa, the gradual breaking down of his Jewish prejudices, as seen in his lodging in the house of a tanner, and how this may have prepared him in some measure for the fuller revelation that God is no respecter of persons.

(3) Mark how at the same time that the Lord was thus preparing Peter to preach to the Gentiles, he was also preparing Cornelius, a Gentile, for the reception of the gospel; and how in response to his summons and by divine direction, Peter came to him, preached Christ, and was permitted to witness the immediate divine acceptance of Gentiles through the descent upon them of the Holy Spirit.

(4) Notice that the precise thing to which the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem objected was not the salvation of the Gentiles, but that Peter had gone in and *caten* with them, thereby ignoring the national prejudice which regarded the Jews as clean in God's sight, and the Gentiles as unclean. This, however, was but one phase of that general Jewish feeling of exclusiveness, which resulted later in the conflict concerning the relation of the Gentiles to the Jewish law.

(5) Try to comprehend the importance of this revelation of God's grace to the Gentiles. Now it is a trite remark that the gospel is for all men and not for a few, and that all alike are precious in God's sight; but this great truth was first taught the Christian church by the vision of Peter and the conversion of Cornelius.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE CHURCH HAVING REST FROM PERSECUTION.

§ 187. **The Cause of the Temporary Rest from Persecution.** Jewish and Roman history here step in to illustrate and confirm the sacred narrative. The Emperor Caius Caligula, who ascended the throne of the empire about the time of Stephen's martyrdom, was a strange character. He was wholly self-willed, madly impious, utterly careless of human life. . . . Caligula determined to establish the worship of himself throughout the world. He had no opposition to

dread from the pagans, who were ready to adopt any creed or any cult, no matter how degrading, which their rulers prescribed.

Caligula knew, however, that the Jews were more obstinate, because they alone were conscious that they possessed a Divine revelation. He issued orders, therefore, to Petronius, the Roman governor of Syria, Palestine, and the East, to erect his statue in Jerusalem and to compel the Jews to offer sacrifice thereto. Josephus tells us of the opposition which the Jews offered to Caligula; how they abandoned their agricultural operations and assembled in thousands at different points, desiring Petronius to slay them at once, as they could never live if the Divine laws were so violated. The whole energies of the nation were for months concentrated on this one object, the repeal of the impious decree of Caligula, which they at last attained through their own determination and by the intervention of Herod Agrippa, who was then at Rome. It was during this awful period of uncertainty and opposition that the infant Church enjoyed a brief period of repose and quiet growth, because the whole nation from the high priest to the lowest beggar had something else to think of than how to persecute a new sect that was as yet rigorously scrupulous in observing the law of Moses. — *Stokes: Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 94-96.

PETER'S MIRACLES AT LYDDA AND JOPPA.

§ 188. *Peter's Pastoral Journey.* The history now turns from Saul to Peter, to shew us that when the former had been prepared for his special work the latter was taught by revelation that the time had arrived for the next and complete extension of the Church among all nations. Peter had been labouring, as no doubt all the rest of the twelve also (for we have seen that only two were at Jerusalem when Saul came thither), in building up the Churches in Judæa and Samaria, and the narrative of two miracles which follow in the history makes intelligible to us the position of Peter when Cornelius is warned to send for him. — *Lumby: In Cambridge Bible*, Acts, pp. 122, 123.

§ 189. *The Healing of Æneas and the Raising of Dorcas.* St. Peter made his tour of inspection "throughout all parts," Samaria, Galilee, Judæa, terminating with Lydda, where he healed, or at least prayed for the healing of Æneas, and with Joppa, where his prayer was followed by the restoration of Tabitha or Dorcas, who has given a designation now widely applied to the assistance which devout women can give to their poorer sisters in Christ. We thus see how God by the secret guidance of His Spirit, shaping his course by ways and roads known only to Himself, led St. Peter to the house of Simon the tanner, where he abode many days. — *Stokes: Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 96, 97.

§ 190. *St. Peter and Simon the Tanner.* When a great change is impending various little circumstances occur all showing the tendencies of the age . . . , and [when read] . . . in the light of accomplished facts, men behold their significance. Thus it was with Simon Peter and his visit to Simon the tanner of Joppa. Tanners as a class were despised and comparatively outcast among the Jews. Tanning was counted an unclean trade because of the necessary contact with dead bodies which it involved. A tan yard must, according to Jewish law, be separated by fifty yards at least from human dwellings. If a man married a woman without informing her of his trade as a tanner, she was granted a divorce. The whole trade of tanners was under a ban, and yet it was to a tanner's house that the Apostle made his way, and there he lodged for many days, showing that the mind even of St. Peter was steadily rising above narrow Jewish prejudices into that higher and nobler atmosphere where he learned in fullest degree that no man and no lawful trade is to be counted common or unclean. — *Stokes: Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 119, 120.

THE CONVERSION AND BAPTISM OF CORNELIUS.

§ 191. **The Conversion of Cornelius an Epoch-making Event.** Cornelius is an important character, as being one of the first to receive Christian Baptism without circumcision, and apparently the first uncircumcised convert who was received (with his household) into full Christian fellowship. . . . The prominence given to the story, the employment of St. Peter in the matter, and his reference to it, all show that the event was an epoch in the history of the Church. But although Cornelius was certainly uncircumcised, and therefore not a full proselyte, he is nevertheless represented as in a near and friendly relation to Judaism. . . . Authorities differ as to the requirements made of these persons. But they were liberally dealt with, and the result of this liberality was the attachment to Judaism in a loose way of vast multitudes of "half Jews." . . . To the strictest section of these half-proselytes Cornelius belonged. It was from their ranks that the Christian Church was mainly recruited, and the importance of Cornelius is that he leads the way. — *Bernard*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Cornelius," p. 660a.

§ 192. **Cornelius Praying, Directed to Send for Peter.** During the Apostle's stay at Joppa an event occurred destined to have no small influence on the spread of the Church. Cæsarea, as has already been stated, was the headquarters of the Roman government in Judæa. Among the troops quartered there was a cohort of Italians, possibly volunteers, and amongst its officers was a centurion named Cornelius, a devout man, who had learned to worship the one true God, and was well known for his almsgiving and uprightness of life. One day, about the ninth hour, the hour of prayer, he beheld in a vision an angel who informed him that his prayers and alms were not forgotten before God, and bade him send for the Apostle, now lodging at Joppa, who would tell him what he should do, and inform him concerning that faith which had already excited much attention in the neighbourhood. — *Maclear*: New Testament History, pp. 396, 397.

§ 193. **The Probable Subject of Cornelius's Prayer.** From Cornelius's own narrative, vs. 31, as well as from the analogy of God's dealings, we are certainly justified in inferring, with Neander, that the subject of his prayers was that he might be guided into truth, and if so, hardly without reference to that faith which was now spreading so widely over Judæa. . . . Further than this, we cannot infer with certainty; but, if *the peculiar difficulty present in his mind* be sought, we can hardly avoid the conclusion that it was connected with the apparent necessity of embracing Judaism and circumcision in order to become a believer on Christ. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, p. 111a.

§ 194. **Peter Sent for by Cornelius.** No sooner had Cornelius obtained this important and joyful certainty [the knowledge of Peter's whereabouts], than he sent two of his slaves, and a soldier that waited on him, . . . to fetch the longed-for teacher of divine truth. But this divine leading would not have attained its end, Peter would not have complied with the request of Cornelius, if he had not been prepared . . . by the inward enlightening of the Divine Spirit [through the vision on the housetop], to acknowledge and rightly interpret this outward call of God. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, p. 73.

§ 195. **Peter's Vision.** (1) *Its Time and Place.* — As in ch. 3: 1, we again find St. Peter observing the Jewish hours of prayer. The "hunger" mentioned in the next verse implies that up to that time he had partaken of no food, and makes it probable that it was one of the days, the second and fifth in the week, which the Pharisees and other devout Jews observed as fasts. The flat housetop of an Eastern house was commonly used for prayer and meditation, and in a city

like Joppa, and a house like that of the tanner, was probably the only place accessible for such a purpose. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 172a.

(2) *Its Purpose*. — The vision . . . was admirably suited to serve its purpose. It based itself . . . on Peter's natural feelings and circumstances, just as spiritual things ever base themselves upon and respond to the natural shadows of this lower life. . . . Peter was hungry, and a sheet was seen let down from heaven containing all kinds of animals, clean and unclean, together with creeping things and fowls of heaven. He was commanded to rise and slay and appease his hunger. He states the objection, quite natural in the mouth of a conscientious Jew, that nothing common or unclean had ever been eaten by him. Then the heavenly voice uttered words which struck for him the death-knell of the old haughty Jewish exclusiveness, inaugurating the grand spirit of Christian liberalism and of human equality — "What God hath cleansed, make thou not common." The vision was thrice repeated to make the matter sure, and then the heavens were shut up again, and Peter was left to interpret the Divine teaching for himself. Peter, in the light of the circumstances which a few moments later took place, easily read the interpretation of the vision. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 127, 128.

§ 196. **The Symbolic Import of Peter's Vision.** The symbolical import of this vision we can easily conjecture. The vessel denotes the creation, especially mankind; the letting down of it from heaven, the descent of all creatures from the same divine origin; the four corners are the four quarters of the globe; the clean and unclean beasts represent the Jews and Gentiles; and the command to eat contains the divine declaration that the new creation in Christ has henceforth annulled the Mosaic laws respecting food, as well as the distinction between clean and unclean nations; and that even the heathen, therefore, were to be received into the Christian church without the intervention of Judaism, as the cloth, with all the animals, was taken up again to heaven. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 221.

§ 197. **Peter in Cæsarea; the Practical Application of the Vision.** Scarce had Peter awaked from his trance and begun to reflect on the meaning of this appearance, when the Gentile messengers presented themselves at the door of the house. . . . He entertained the strangers, and on the next day went with them and six brethren, to Cæsarea. Cornelius, who in the mean time had called together his kinsmen and near friends, fell upon his knees before the desired divine commissioned teacher. . . . After hearing from the centurion the reason of his sending for him, perceiving the wonderful coincidence of the two visions, and being convinced by his own eyes of the Gentile's humble readiness to receive religious instruction, he broke forth in the wonderful words. . . . "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."

Here Peter brings out the principle of the universalism of Christianity in opposition to the Jewish particularism. National distinctions, he would say, have nothing to do with admission into the kingdom of God. The great requisite is, not descent from Abraham, not circumcision, but simply a sincere desire for salvation. God looks upon the heart; and to every one who reveres him according to the measure of his knowledge and advantages, and lives accordingly, he will graciously show the way to the Saviour, who alone can satisfy the cravings of his soul. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, pp. 221, 222.

§ 198. **The Descent of the Spirit upon Cornelius and his Company.** Peter proceeded to recall to these Gentiles all that they had heard of the preaching of peace by Jesus Christ the Lord of all; of His life and ministry after the baptism of John; how God anointed Him with the Holy Spirit and with power;

how He went about doing good, and healing all who were under the tyranny of the devil; and then of the Crucifixion and Resurrection from the dead, of which the disciples were the appointed witnesses, commissioned by the Voice of their risen Lord to testify that He is the destined Judge of the quick and dead. . . . Suddenly on these unbaptised Gentiles no less than on the Jews who were present, fell that inspired emotion of superhuman utterance which was the signature of Pentecost. "The Holy Ghost fell upon them."—*Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 158.

§ 199. **The Baptism of Cornelius and his Company.** The gift of the Holy Ghost in the case of Cornelius and his friends preceded Baptism and the laying on of hands, and formed St. Peter's justification for baptizing uncircumcised persons. Their hearts were cleansed by faith, and they received the Spirit by their faith, not by circumcision (*cf.* Gal. 3: 2; "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?").—*Bernard*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Cornelius," p. 660a.

JEWISH PREJUDICES SILENCED.

§ 200. **Attitude of the Jews toward the Gentiles.** The feeling [of enmity toward Gentiles] was widely diffused, and showed itself in forms more or less rigorous wherever Jews and heathen came in contact with each other. The strict Jew would not enter a Gentile's house, nor sit on the same couch, nor eat or drink out of the same vessel. The very dust of a heathen city was defiling. The Hindoo feeling of caste, shrinking from contact with those of a lower grade, driven to madness and mutiny by "greased cartridges," presents the nearest modern analogue.—*Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 176.

§ 201. **St. Peter Returns to Jerusalem and is Reproached for his Liberality.** It is probable that those who reproached Peter with acting disorderly were only a party in the church at Jerusalem who regarded the observance of the law of Moses, if not essential to salvation, yet of the greatest importance; and specially that the rite of circumcision should be observed first, before any were admitted to either social or church fellowship. They did not censure Peter because he had preached the gospel to them, or caused them to be baptized, but that he had associated with them. His grave offence was that, contrary to the customs of his people, and the commands of the rabbins, he had eaten with the uncircumcised.—*Ormiston*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 226.

§ 202. **St. Peter Justifies his Action.** He set the rigid Jewish Christians at rest respecting his conduct, by giving them a full account of the whole wonderful transaction, so that they also praised God, that he had given repentance and the Holy Ghost to the Gentiles. And now that God himself had so plainly broken down the partition wall between Jews and Gentiles, and had glorified his grace in the latter, the narrow Judaism, which made circumcision the condition of salvation, became henceforth a formal heresy.—*Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 223.

§ 203. **The Gentiles Made Partakers of the Promise.** The event recorded in this chapter was an important crisis in the progress of Christianity. Hitherto it had won its way among Jews, and through their instrumentality, so that it might be regarded as a peculiar Jewish sect; but now it was to be presented as a religion for the race, Jew and Gentile alike—a worship for the world. All restrictions of every kind were now to be removed, and the universal adaptation and power of the gospel was to be proclaimed and exemplified. What seems to us simple as a self-evident truth was then a mystery—that the Gentiles should be "partakers of the promise in Christ by the Gospel."—*Ormiston*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 216.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 204. **Memorials before God.** The most enduring monuments that men erect are not built in this world but in the next. They consist of that which men usually value least, but which God prizes most — prayers and alms. Not prayers alone, that is, the inner life in its relations to God, nor alms alone, that is, the outward life in its relation to men, but prayers *and* alms, faith *and* works, man's whole life in its higher as well as in its lower relations.

§ 205. **Prejudices are Narrowing, Truth is Broadening.** In so far as men surrender themselves to prejudices they become narrow and intolerant. Spiritual enlargement is experienced only when men break through their prejudices, and humbly follow the guidance of truth. Had Peter stubbornly clung to his inherited prejudices, he would not have lodged with a tanner nor eaten with an uncircumcised Gentile, and he would have missed the blessing in store for him in both places.

§ 206. **Revelation is Progressive.** It was necessary until the coming of Christ that Israel should be kept a peculiar people; hence the Mosaic law. The law of separation having accomplished its work, the barriers were removed, and henceforth the elect of God are "Whosoever will."

§ 207. **The Holy Spirit, the Guide to Truth.** In fulfillment of Christ's promise (Jo. 16: 3) the Holy Spirit became the guide of the church into a more perfect understanding of the nature and scope of God's revelation through Christ. So the Spirit is still the agent whereby the church and the world experience each fresh illumination, and each new uplifting of humanity toward God.

§ 208. **The Equality of Men before God.** Peter and the church in Jerusalem were first taught this important truth through the vision at Joppa. We accept it, nominally at least, although even in Christian lands it is difficult to realize it in actual life. The caste feeling is not confined to India. Could the divine estimate of man prevail among men, it would revolutionize society.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. CÆSAREA, ITS LOCATION AND EXTENT: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, pp. 102, 103; *Ency. Brit.*, vol. iv, Art., "Cæsarea Palestina." 2. THE SPIRITUAL ATTITUDE OF CORNELIUS AT THE TIME OF THE ANGEL'S VISIT: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 219, 220; *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 201, 202. 3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PETER'S VISION AT JOPPA: *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 195, 196. 4. DOES PETER IN ACTS 10: 34, 35 TEACH THAT ALL RELIGIONS ARE OF EQUAL VALUE: *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 204, 205. 5. THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONVERSION OF CORNELIUS: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts pp. 202, 203.

Lesson 11. — THE ESTABLISHING OF A GENTILE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH. Further Results of the Great Persecution in Jerusalem.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 209. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the influence of the persecution in Jerusalem extended beyond Palestine, and, through the preaching of those who were scattered abroad, resulted in the establishment of a church in Antioch of Syria into which Gentiles were freely received without submitting to the requirements of the Jewish law.

§ 210. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Recall the effect of the persecution in Jerusalem, — the work in Samaria, the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch, and the spread of the gospel throughout Palestine, — and call attention to the fact that in this lesson we study its still more remote effects.

(2) Note that the men who came to Antioch preaching the gospel were Hellenists, and presumably not bound by the rigid notions of the Palestinian Jews, and that when they found themselves in the midst of a vast pagan population they naturally followed the impulse of their Christian love and proclaimed Christ to the Gentiles also.

(3) Point out the special fitness of the Hellenist, Barnabas, for the mission on which he was sent by the church at Jerusalem, and give him credit for his sagacity in calling Saul from his obscurity into this conspicuous work in the capital of Western Asia.

(4) Be careful not to leave the impression that the church thus founded was composed wholly of Gentile converts, but make it clear that it is called a Gentile church, because it was the first in which Jews and uncircumcised Gentiles stood on the same footing.

(5) Show the triumph of the gospel over its enemies, in the fact that the name Christian, now the most honorable title in the world, was originally bestowed in ridicule and scorn.

(6) Show finally how this church at Antioch immediately manifested its true Christian spirit by its sympathetic liberality toward its depressed sister churches in Judea.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE ESTABLISHING OF A GENTILE CHURCH IN ANTIOCH.

§ 211. **Antioch in Syria.** (1) *Its situation.* — This metropolis was situated where the chain of Lebanon, running northwards, and the chain of Amanus, running southwards from the Taurus, are brought to an abrupt meeting. Here the Orontes breaks through the mountains; and Antioch was placed at a bend of the river, partly on an island, partly on the level which forms the left bank, and partly on the steep and craggy ascent of Mount Silpius, which rose abruptly on the south. — *Howson and Wilson*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Antioch," p. 152a.

(2) *Its Splendor.* — Antioch was . . . in point of situation, architectural magnificence, and resources of enjoyment, ranked after Rome and Alexandria as the next city of its time. . . . The city itself, abounding in fine buildings, seems to have been for nothing so remarkable in this direction as for its streets and porticoes, which were styled "golden," with reference to the splendour of the columns, and perhaps, more literally, to the application of gold as a means of ornamentation. The principal street traversed the entire length of the city from east to west, a distance of about 4 miles, having four parallel rows of columns, forming a broad road in the middle open to the sky, and on each side a narrower covered way or portico. The road in the middle was laid with granite in the time of Antoninus Pius. From this main street others branched off at intervals up to the higher part of the town on the one hand, and down towards the river on the other — *Murray*: In Ency. Brit., vol. ii, Art., "Antioch," p. 131.

(3) *Its Suburb Daphne.*—The chief retreat of pleasure was the cypress grove of Daphne, at a distance of between 4 and 5 miles, but connected with the city by a suburb called Heraclea, the road passing among the beautiful villas, gardens with fountains, hot springs, medicinal wells, brooks, and, in short, if we may trust the ancient writers who speak from personal observation, every combination of salubrity and beauty. Seleucus Nicator had laid out the grove of Daphne, and erected in it a temple of Apollo and Diana. . . . In the temple of Apollo was a colossal statue of that god.—*Murray*: In *Ency. Brit.*, vol. ii, Art., “Antioch,” p. 131*b*.

(4) *Its Immorality.*—A system of gods, combining both Asiatic and Hellenic, had been formed in the beautiful capital of Syria, Antioch on the Orontes, with its “half-barbaric” population, *i. e.* of Greeks and Asiatics mixed. In the neighbouring seat of pleasure, Daphne, with its groves of cypress and laurel, rich in springs, where nature herself invited to a life of wanton enjoyment, Astarte and Apollo were worshipped; but their rite resembled that of Baal and Astarte. Daphne was noted throughout the whole of the ancient world, and the people of Daphne had become proverbial for their luxurious festivals, unbridled debauchery, and unnatural vices, which the kings of Syria and their subjects rivalled one another in displaying there to the glory of the god; and it continued so under the Roman rule.—*Dollinger*: *Gentile and Jew*, vol. i, p. 432.

§ 212. **The Gospel Preached by Hellenists to the Gentiles at Antioch.** While the majority of the Christians scattered by the persecution, however far they might penetrate into the distant country, preached the word of Christ exclusively to the Jews, there was yet among them certain men out of Cyprus and Cyrene, consequently converted Hellenists, who in Antioch, whither they had come, spoke also with Hellenes (heathen), preaching the gospel of the Lord Jesus. . . . [This term] *can only* refer to uncircumcised heathen. It is possible that many of these were already “proselytes of the gate” [see *Library Extracts* on Lesson 7, §136], but this was a relation which was perfectly free. There may, with equal probability, have been some among them who had never yet entered a synagogue. If the gospel were preached to such as these, the last step had already been taken, and the word of Christ had come to the heathen. . . .

Under the divine guidance, one step after another had been taken towards carrying the gospel out of the region of purely orthodox Judaism, through many border lands, at it were, into the country proper of heathenism. The instruments of God were . . . Hellenists, *i. e.* Jews who by place of residence, language, and education, stood nearer to the heathen, and were therefore . . . called to be “mediators between Judaism and heathenism.”—*Lechler*: *Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times*, vol. i, pp. 116, 117, 119.

§ 213. **News of the Work at Antioch Received in Jerusalem.** We see a clear indication that the events at Antioch happened subsequently to those at Cæsarea, in the manner in which the news was received at Jerusalem. There seems to have been no strife, no discussion, no controversy. The question had been already raised and decided after St. Peter's return. So the apostles simply select a fitting messenger to go forth with the authority of the apostles and to complete the work which, having been initiated in baptism, merely now demanded that imposition of hands which, as we have seen in the case of the Samaritan converts, was one of the special functions of the apostles and the chiefs of the Church at Jerusalem. And in choosing Barnabas the apostles made a wise choice.—*Stokes*: *Acts*, vol. ii, p. 155.

§ 214. **Barnabas Sent to Antioch; Saul Brought to his Aid.** They [the Apostles at Jerusalem] did not send one of the original Twelve, because not one

of them was fitted for the peculiar work now demanded. They were all . . . devoid of that wide and generous training which God had given to Barnabas. . . . He was a Hellenistic Jew, and he could sympathise with the wider feelings and ideas of the Hellenists. He was a man of Cyprus, a friend and perhaps connexion of many, both Jews and Gentiles, among those whose new-born faith and hope were now in question. . . .

Barnabas had another virtue too. He knew his own weakness. . . . He felt his want of the active vigorous mind of his friend of boyhood . . . Saul. He knew where he was living in comparative obscurity and silence: so after a little experience of the atmosphere of Antioch he departed to Tarsus to seek for him and bring him back where a great work was awaiting [him]. . . . Saul of Tarsus possessed . . . a powerful, a logical, and a creative intellect. He realised from the beginning what his own principles meant and to what they were leading him. He taught not Judaism or the Law with an addition merely about Jesus of Nazareth. He troubled not himself about circumcision or the old covenant, but he taught from the very beginning Christ Jesus, Christ in His divine and human nature, Christ in His various offices, Jesus Christ as the one hope for mankind [and was therefore especially fitted for this work among Gentiles in Antioch]. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 155-157, 159.

§ 215. **Spiritual Results a Proof of the Divine Favor.** [Barnabas] was kind in disposition; the inspiration of his service was not ecclesiastical pride or ambition, but love and good-will; full of and ready to be guided by the Spirit of God; and of faith or spiritual insight, the power which sees the things that are unseen, and hence was able to appreciate the spiritual. For these reasons he accepted the grace of God, literally *the grace which was of God* (Alford), manifested by the spiritual changes wrought in the character of the uncircumcised Greeks, as an evidence of the Divine approval which far outweighed his preconceived opinions as to the ecclesiastical regularity of the proceedings. The lesson for us is that spiritual results are always to be accepted with thanksgiving, whatever the seeming ecclesiastical irregularity of the method, and that they will be thus accepted by those whose religion is one characteristically of faith in God and good-will toward man. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 135*b*.

§ 216. **The Origin of the Name "Christians."** The word *Christian* occurs in the N. T. only three times; here [in the above passage, Acts 11:26]; in Agrippa's sarcastic response to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian" (Acts 26:28); and in 1 Pet. 4:16, "If any man suffer as a Christian." The use of the term in the two latter passages, and the fact that it is never used by the disciples in speaking of themselves, indicates that it was first employed as a term of opprobrium. It could not have been given by the Jews, for the term Christian (anointed one) was one of honor among the Jews, by whom the disciples were known as the "sect of the Nazarenes;" and Julian the Apostate later forbade their use of the name Christian, and decreed that they should be called Galileans. The inhabitants of Antioch are said to have been notorious for employing names of derision; and the probability is that this name was invented by the heathen of that city, in derision of the central doctrine of the new sect, the redemption offered through Christ Jesus, but was accepted and made an honored name by the disciples. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 136*a*.

THE FAMINE. RELIEF SENT FROM ANTIOCH TO JUDEA.

§ 217. **The Gift of Prophecy.** [These prophets were] inspired teachers in the early Christian church, referred to in the Acts, and in the Epistles of Paul.

They might be of either sex. The foretelling of future events was not the usual form which their inspiration took, but that of an *exalted and superhuman teaching*, ranked by St. Paul above 'speaking with tongues,' in being the *utterance of their own conscious intelligence informed by the Holy Spirit*. This inspiration was however, occasionally, as here, and in ch. 21: 10, made the vehicle of *prophecy*, properly so called. [Agabus was] the same who prophesied Paul's imprisonment in Jerusalem [nothing further is known of him]. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, p. 129.

§ 218. **The Famine Foretold by Agabus; Fulfilment of his Prophecy.** This famine is mentioned by Josephus, who tells how Helena, queen of Adiabene, being at Jerusalem, succored the people by procuring for them corn from Alexandria and a cargo of figs from Cyprus. The date of this severe famine was A.D. 45. Though one region might be specially afflicted by the failure of its crops, all the rest of the Roman empire would be sure to suffer in some degree at the same time, and especially where famines were, as at this time, of frequent recurrence. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 145.

§ 219. **Alms Sent to Judea by the Church at Antioch.** God did not suffer His own Christian people, probably the poorest and certainly most disregarded in that country, to perish in the great distress. . . . The Gentile disciples felt that they were bound by the closest link to those Jewish brethren whom though they had never seen they loved. "For if the Gentiles had been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty was also to minister unto them in carnal things." No time was lost in preparing for the coming calamity. All the members of the Christian community, according to their means, "determined to send relief," Saul and Barnabas being chosen to take the contribution to the elders at Jerusalem. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, p. 127.

Baumgarten, in tracing the gradual transition of the apostolic narrative from Jewish to Gentile Christianity, calls this contribution, sent from Antioch to Jerusalem, the first stretching out of the hand by the Gentile world across the ancient gulf which separated it from Israel. . . . The church at Jerusalem was poor, probably in connexion with the community of goods, which would soon have this effect. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, p. 130a.

§ 220. **Elders in the Early Church.** (1) *Duties of the Office.* — The *elders*, or *presbyters*, in the official sense of the term, were those appointed in the first churches to watch over their general discipline and welfare. With reference to that duty, they were called also superintendents, or bishops. The first was their Jewish appellation, transferred to them perhaps from the similar class of officers in the synagogues; the second was their foreign appellation, since the Greeks employed it to designate such relations among themselves. In accordance with this distinction, we find the general rule to be this: those who are called elders in speaking of Jewish communities are called bishops in speaking of Gentile communities. Hence the latter term is the prevailing one in Paul's Epistles. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 180.

(2) *The Occasion of the Office.* — The elders are abruptly mentioned in vs. 30, without any statement of the mode in which they came into office. We may, however, conjecture that a procedure was adopted in this respect which resembled the one described in ch. 6: 1-6, when the Seven were chosen in Jerusalem. The congregations which were formed beyond the limits of the city of Jerusalem, undoubtedly needed, at the earliest period, a certain organization and rules of government, as distinct societies; and even in the Holy City itself, the Christians may have become conscious of the need of rulers and guides, in order that the

apostles might be at liberty to devote themselves entirely to their special vocation. — *Lechler* : In Lange's Commentary, Acts, pp. 221, 222.

§ 221. **The Return of Barnabas and Saul to Antioch.** Paul and Barnabas made this journey to Jerusalem probably near the beginning of the year A.D. 45; for the famine commenced at the close of the preceding year, and the supplies collected in anticipation of that event would naturally be forwarded before the distress began to be severe. That the journey took place about this time results from its being mentioned in connection with Herod's death. The two friends appear to have remained at Jerusalem but a short time, as may be inferred from the object of their mission, and still more decisively from the absence of any allusion to this journey in Gal. 2 : 1 sq. — *Hackett* : Commentary, Acts, p. 156.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 222. **"Truth Crushed to Earth Will Rise Again."** How little the unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem who sought to stamp out Christianity by fierce persecution dreamed that their efforts would not only fail so far as Jerusalem itself was concerned, but that these efforts would result in establishing churches throughout Judea, among the detested Samaritans, and even among the despised Gentiles.

§ 223. **The Humblest Means Used for the Greatest Purposes.** The disciples through whom Christianity passed from the Jewish into the Gentile world were not the apostles at Jerusalem, but certain obscure believers of whom not even the names have been preserved, but who obeyed the promptings of their loving hearts, and without asking leave of anybody, simply did the duty that seemed to lie next to them.

§ 224. **No Place Too Hard for the Gospel to Win Shining Victories.** Antioch, famous for its wealth and luxury but above all for its unparalleled licentiousness, might have been thought one of the last places to be influenced by the gospel; nevertheless it was the first great city outside of Jerusalem to welcome the truth, and not only to witness the establishment of a flourishing church, but one that became in the providence of God, the mother church of Gentile Christianity.

§ 225. **The Gospel the Power of God for the Transformation of Humanity.** The success that attended the preaching of those nameless disciples in Antioch was not due to anything in themselves. Only the power of God could so transform and inspire the hearts and lives of men in Antioch that out of them should go forth streams of unselfish love and ennobling beneficence.

§ 226. **The Name "Christian."** This name, given probably in derision, is now borne proudly by the most enlightened and civilized nations in the world. No one of us would feel complimented to be called a heathen or a Mohammedan. But to be a Christian in name only, and not in the highest and truest sense, is to be responsible for the abuse of the greatest privileges that God has bestowed on men.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. ANCIENT ANTIOCH AND THE GROVE OF DAPHNE: *Farrar*, Life of St. Paul, pp. 162-166; *Ency. Brit.*, vol. ii, Art. "Antioch"; *Wallace*, Ben-Hur, Bk. iv, chs. 5, 6.
2. BARNABAS, HIS CHARACTER AND WORK: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. i, pp. 219-221; vol. ii, pp. 135-157.
3. THE EPISTLE OF BARNABAS: *Ency. Brit.*, vol. ii, Art., "Apostolic Fathers."
4. THE NAME "CHRISTIAN," ITS ORIGIN AND SIGNIFICANCE: *Farrar*, Life of St. Paul, pp. 167-169.
5. DURATION AND EXTENT OF THE FAMINE: *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 105, 106; *Thatcher*, History of the Apostolic Church, p. 116.

Lesson 12. — FAITH AND MORALS IN THE JEWISH CHURCHES. The Epistle of James, the Lord's Brother.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 227. **Design of the Lesson.** To learn from the epistle of James the social and religious condition of the Jewish Christian churches about the middle of the first century.

§ 228. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson gather up the main facts concerning the apostle James — his life before and after his conversion, his character, his reputation among all classes of Jews for stern and ascetic sanctity, and the traditions respecting his influence and death.

(2) Read the entire epistle of James, if possible at a single sitting, and mark its general contents; then notice to whom it is addressed, and that it was not written to teach Christian doctrines, but to improve the moral and religious lives of its readers. Note also the special reasons that impelled James to address such warnings, comforts, and exhortations to these Jewish Christians.

(3) In teaching the lesson call attention briefly to the facts thus gathered up, and show how the letter incidentally reflects the social and religious condition of those to whom it was written, for we cannot believe that the reproofs and exhortations in it are evoked by imaginary situations.

(4) Show from these incidental inferences the social and moral state of these Jewish Christians, their virtues and their faults, the temptations to which they were peculiarly exposed, as well as the trials which they were forced to bear.

(5) Emphasize the fact that notwithstanding the unsatisfactory condition into which these churches had fallen, James has confidence in them, because underneath many deplorable errors and grave faults lay the solid foundation of a real faith in Christ.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE EPISTLE OF JAMES.

§ 229. **The Writer of the Epistle.** In calling himself simply James and describing himself only as the servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, his self-designation would only be intelligible to the readers on the supposition that he was the Lord's brother, who by his authoritative position at the head of the Church in Jerusalem, possessed such pre-eminence that it was not necessary to distinguish himself from others of the same name. It is only in the case of one who was regarded by all Jewish Christians as the supreme authority, that it is conceivable how he could address himself to all the believing Jews of the Diaspora [the Jews scattered abroad] with words of such earnest reproof and warning. . . . The whole doctrinal peculiarity of the Epistle is entirely in keeping with the historical portrait of this James in whom alone, on account of his legal piety, the Messianic faith seems to have fulfilled the ideal of a genuine Israelite. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Testament, vol. ii, pp. 111, 112.

§ 230. **Early Traditions Concerning St. James.** He was holy from his mother's womb; he drank not wine or strong drink, nor did he eat animal food; a razor came not upon his head; he did not anoint himself with oil; he did not use the bath. He alone might go into the holy place; for he wore no woollen clothes, but linen. And alone he used to go into the Temple, and there he was commonly found upon his knees, praying for forgiveness for the people, so that his knees grew dry and thin (generally translated *hard*) like a camel's, from his constantly bending them in prayer and entreating forgiveness for the people. On account therefore of his exceeding righteousness he was called 'Just' and 'Oblias,' which means in Greek 'the bulwark of the people,' and 'righteousness,' as the prophets declare of him. — *Hegesippus*: In Eusebius's Ecclesiastical History, vol. ii, p. 23.

§ 231. **St. James a Pattern of Jewish Christian Piety.** We must attribute to James a completely legal, particularly an ascetic piety. . . . The persistent supplication for forgiveness for the people of Israel is manifestly a purely *Christian* feature; for the guilt for which he entreated forgiveness cannot fitly be found except in unbelief and the rejection of Jesus as the Messiah. This prayer had therefore its origin in faith, and at the same time in a feeling of heartfelt piety, and in a genuine Christian character. . . . The *second* feature is the universal Old Testament piety, which may be inferred chiefly from the impression that his mode of life and action made upon the Israelites by whom he was surrounded, on account of which he received the honourable title, "the Righteous One." In the narrative of *Hegesippus* he is seven times called "just," sometimes even "the just" absolutely, not James the just. At that period of Israelitish history, the name denoted those who kept the Mosaic commands blamelessly. — *Lechler*: Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 60, 61.

§ 232. **Those Addressed in the Epistle.** The letter which bears the name of James purports to be addressed to the "twelve tribes that are scattered abroad" (literally in the dispersion). No other Epistle takes so wide a range. . . . [It] is, in the fullest sense of the word, a Catholic or Universal Epistle.

On the other hand, there seems, at times, to be an implied limitation. He writes to those who "hold the faith of the Lord Jesus Christ," (ch. 2: 1), who have His worthy (or noble) Name called upon them (ch. 2: 7), who live in the expectation of His coming (ch. 5: 7). Seen from one point of view, the Epistle seems a call to the outward Israel, such as the preaching of the Baptist had been, to be true to their calling, to live by the light they had, to conquer the besetting sins of their race. Seen from another, it is an earnest appeal to the Israelites who had accepted Jesus as the Christ, to be on their guard, lest those sins should reappear in the new society of the church of God. From yet a third stand-point it seems to be addressed specially to the Churches of Judæa. It speaks of forms of persecution and oppression, which obviously refer directly to the acts of violence that followed on the death of Stephen, and were renewed under Herod Agrippa I. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, James, Int., p. 35.

§ 233. **The Purpose of the Epistle Not Doctrinal, but Ethical.** The main object of the Epistle is not to teach doctrine, but to improve morality. St. James is the moral teacher of the N. T.; not in such sense a moral teacher as not to be at the same time a maintainer and teacher of Christian doctrine, but yet mainly in this Epistle a moral teacher, like the author of the *Teaching of the Apostles*, a generation later. There are two ways of explaining this characteristic of the Epistle. Some commentators and writers see in St. James a man who had not realised the essential principles and peculiarities of Christianity, but was in a transition state, half-Jew and half-Christian. . . . But there is another and more

natural way of accounting for the fact. St. James was writing for a special class of persons, and knew what that class especially needed; and therefore, under the guidance of God's Spirit, he adapted his instructions to their capacities and wants. — *Meyrick*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "James, General Epistle of," p. 1522a.

SOCIAL AND MORAL CONDITION OF THE JEWISH CHRISTIANS.

§ 234. **Jewish Christians; Significance of the Term.** We call the believers, of whom we here speak, "Jewish-Christians," in accordance with universal usage. But this name has reference only to national descent, and not to view or tendency. . . . It is natural to conclude that birth and education, intercourse and custom, determine even the opinion and tendency of man; and that the Jewish-Christians must have been influenced by their descent in their entire conception of divine things and in their religious position. Only we must not forget that this influence might be moderate, sound, and true; or exaggerated, sickly, and false. In the former case, we speak simply of Jewish-Christian tendency. In the latter case, the tendency is characterized as "Judaizing" or "Judaistic." . . . But just as a man might be a Jewish-Christian without having a Judaistic tendency, so, on the other hand, a Christian might Judaize without being born a Jew, as *e. g.* the Gentile Christians in Galatia who suffered themselves to be led astray by Judaizing false teachers. — *Lechler*: Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 35, 36.

§ 235. **Relation of the Jewish Christians to their Unbelieving Brethren.** Believers . . . were originally, as a society, nothing but a limited company of like-minded Israelites among the people of God, who saw the Messiah in Jesus of Nazareth, and did homage to Him. Notwithstanding the fact that they were closely united among themselves, they still remained, as before, members of the civil and religious national community of Israel. They were in a certain sense only a party, a sect within the national community of Israel, which was comprehensive and tolerant towards all varieties and differences, and with which they purposed remaining in external and internal life-association. — *Lechler*: Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, p. 108.

§ 236. **Two Reasons Why St. James Addressed the Jewish Christians.** St. James, living in the centre of Jerusalem, saw what were the chief sins and vices of his countrymen; and, fearing that his flock might share in them, he lifted up his voice to warn them against the contagion from which they not only might, but did in part, suffer. This was his main object; but there is another closely connected with it. As Christians, his readers were exposed to trials which they did not bear with the patience and faith that would have become them.

Here then are the two objects of the Epistle — 1, to warn against the sins to which as Jews they were most liable; 2, to console and exhort them under the sufferings to which as Christians they were most exposed. The warnings and consolations are mixed together, for the writer does not seem to have set himself down to compose an essay or a letter of which he had previously arranged the heads; but, like one of the old Prophets, to have poured out what was uppermost in his thoughts, or closest to his heart, without waiting to connect his matter, or to throw bridges across from subject to subject. — *Meyrick*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "James, General Epistle of," p. 1522.

§ 237. **The Situation of the Jewish Christians as Discussed in the Epistle.** The situation of these Judæo-Christian churches or congregations, as discernible in the Epistle, was this. They were tried by manifold trials, ch. 1: 2. We are hardly justified in assuming that they were entirely made up of poor, on

account of ch. 2: 6, 7: indeed the former verses of that chapter seem to shew, that rich men were also found among them. However, this probably was so for the most part, and they were oppressed and dragged before the judgment-seats by the rich, which trials they did not bear with that patience and humility which might have been expected of them as Christians, nor did they in faith seek wisdom from God concerning them: but regarded Him as their tempter, and their lowliness as shame, paying carnal court to the rich, and despising the poor.—*Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, Prolegomena, p. 100.

§ 238. **The Faults of the Jewish Christians.** The Jewish vices against which he [James] warns them are—Formalism, which made the service of God consist in washings and outward ceremonies, whereas he reminds them (1: 27) that it consists rather in Active Love and Purity . . . ; Fanaticism, which under the cloak of religious zeal was tearing Jerusalem to pieces (1: 20); Fatalism, which threw its sins on God (1: 13); Meanness, which crouched before the rich (2: 2); Falsehood, which had made words and oaths playthings (3: 2-12); Partisanship (3: 14); Evil-speaking (4: 11); Boasting (4: 16); Oppression (5: 4). The great lesson which he teaches them, as Christians, is Patience—Patience in trial (1: 2); Patience in good works (1: 22-25); Patience under provocations (3: 17); Patience under oppression (5: 7); Patience under persecution (5: 10); and the ground of their Patience is, that the Coming of the Lord draweth nigh, which is to right all wrongs (5: 8).—*Meyrick*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "James, General Epistle of," p. 1522b.

§ 239. **Their Sins of the Tongue.** These sins of the tongue among Jews and Christians sprang in a great measure from the obtrusive rivalries, the contentious ambitions to which he [James] had alluded in the first verse [4: 1]. . . . And because this factiousness shows an absence of true wisdom amid the pride of its imagined presence, he proceeds to contrast the false and the true wisdom. True wisdom, true understanding, is shown by a course of life spent in meekness, which is the attribute of wisdom. For a man to boast of wisdom when his heart is full of bitter emulation and party spirit is a lying vaunt. The wisdom of which he thus boasts is not, at any rate, the heavenly wisdom of the Christian, but earthly, animal, demon-like. The wisdom which evinces itself in party spirit leads to unhallowed chaos and every contemptible practice.—*Farrar*: Early Days of Christianity, p. 338.

§ 240. **Their Ambition to be Teachers.** It was natural that those who had seized a Shibboleth [salvation by faith], of which they neither fathomed the full depth nor even rightly understood the superficial meaning, should endeavour to force it upon others with irate, obtrusive, and vehement dogmatism. This "itch of teaching," this oracular egotism, is the natural result of vanity and selfishness disguising themselves under the cloak of Gospel proselytism. With all such men words take the place of works, and dogmatising contentiousness of peace and love. Therefore he warns them against being many teachers—self-constituted ministers—"other peoples' bishops"—persons of that large class who assume that no incompetence is too absolute to rob them of the privilege of infallibility in laying down the law of truth for others.—*Farrar*: Early Days of Christianity, p. 337.

§ 241. **Their "Wars and Fightings."** (1) As might have been expected, such worldliness of spirit gave rise to strifes and dissensions among them, and to a neglect of self-preservation from the evil in the world, imagining that their Christian faith would suffice to save them, without a holy life.—*Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, Prolegomena, p. 100.

(2) We cannot but feel surprise at such a picture as this. Wars, fightings, pleasures that are ever setting out as it were on hostile expeditions, disappointed desires, frustrate envy and even fruitless murder to supply wants which would have been granted to prayer—then, again, prayers utterly neglected or themselves tainted with sin because misdirected to reckless gratification of pleasure, and because ruined by contentiousness and selfishness—all this spiritual adultery, the divorce of the soul from God to the love of the world—is this indeed a picture of the condition of Christian Churches within thirty years of the death of Christ? . . . I see no possible solution of the difficulty except in the twofold answer—partly that St. James is influenced by the state of things which he saw going on around him in Judæa, and partly that he is drawing no marked line of distinction between Jews and Christians in the communities which he is addressing.—*Farrar*: *Early Days of Christianity*, pp. 339, 340.

§ 242. **The General State of the Christians Addressed.** The state of matters among the Jewish Christians which this letter discloses is not a happy one. Not only had the members of the Church suffered, from unexplained causes, strange reversals of fortune (1: 9, 10); but no such attainment in character as might be expected of Christians, had been made. Of heathen grossness there is indeed no word; but worldly greed and the pride of life and selfish cruelty that come of greed abounded (4: 1; 5: 9). The distinction between rich and poor had been accentuated in unseemly angling for rich proselytes (2: 2), and in heartless contempt of the poor (2: 3). And at the root of all lay a contentment with superficial knowledge and bare profession of faith (2: 14), an otiose creed, and a practical denial of the truth that life is a training ground for the making of “perfected” (1: 4) men, and that only by trials or temptations can men be trained.—*Dods*: *Introduction, New Testament*, p. 190.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 243. **“Saved, Yet so as Through Fire.”** The Jewish Christians whom St. James addressed showed in many respects startlingly defective attainments in their Christian lives; from an external point of view they would compare quite unfavorably with the sleek and sanctimonious Pharisees. But they built on what the Pharisees with all their self-righteousness rejected, namely, Christ; in the day that tries every man’s work this foundation remains, even though the entire superstructure be consumed (1 Cor. 3: 12–15).

§ 244. **Low Attainments vs. High Ideals.** The ideal which St. James lifts up before his very imperfect readers is nothing less than perfection itself (1: 4, 25; 3: 2). God does not accommodate the standard of his requirements to the measure of our wretched attainments. But to every one who earnestly strives to reach the divine standard he gives gracious help and wonderful strength.

§ 245. **Faith and Works.** Faith and works, like prayers and alms (§ 204), are but the inner, or Godward, and the outer, or manward, relations of the one and indivisible spiritual life. Either without the other is insufficient in God’s sight, who demands not a part, but the whole of life.

§ 246. **Keep your Eye on your Tongue.** It is the physical medium through which the inner man reveals himself more than through all the other members together; therefore its subjection, if learned at all, is the hardest and usually the last lesson learned in this world, for it implies nothing less than absolute mastery over one’s self.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. LIFE AND CHARACTER OF ST. JAMES, THE BROTHER OF OUR LORD: *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 20. 2. AUTHORSHIP OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "James, General Epistle of"; and all leading commentaries on the epistle. 3. CHARACTERISTICS AND CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE OF JAMES: *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, chs. 21, 22; *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, p. 289 ff. 4. SIMILARITY BETWEEN THE EPISTLE OF JAMES AND THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: *Dods*, Introduction, New Testament, pp. 191, 192. 5. RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE JEWISH CHRISTIAN CHURCHES: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 37-58. 6. SOCIAL AND DOMESTIC LIFE OF THE EARLY CHRISTIANS: *Ibid.*, pp. 88-108. 7. ST. JAMES AND ST. PAUL ON FAITH AND WORKS: *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 23.

Lesson 13.—REVIEW OF PARTS I, II: LESSONS 1-12. From the Ascension of Christ until the Establishment of a Gentile Church in Antioch. A.D. 30-44.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 247. **Design of the Lesson.** To make a rapid survey of the Scripture material in the lessons reviewed, in order to refresh the memory concerning it and to fix it more clearly in mind. If the lessons reviewed have not been well studied already, the whole time of the class will be taken up in this general survey; but if the lessons have been thoroughly studied from week to week, this *re-view*—this looking them over again—can be made very quickly, and time can be found for the introduction of some new material naturally connected with the lessons studied but not emphasized in them. The suggestions for this review are intended to cover both these cases.

§ 248. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) For the review proper, impress on the class the importance of the lesson, urging them to study it carefully and especially to do all the required written-answer work. The questions in the Quarterly are designed to bring out all the more important events and steps of progress in the history, and if thoroughly studied will do much toward fixing them in mind. In connection with these questions and references cultivate the law of association, so that each reference or question will suggest other matters connected with it.

(2) Request the class to be prepared to state the contents of the Introductory Note to this lesson in the Quarterly, and of the Introductory Notes to Parts I and II (see Lessons 1 and 7). The Introductory Note to this lesson gives a summary of the entire history covered by the lessons for the quarter, and the Introductory Notes to Parts I and II give their characteristics. All these should be studied with care.

(3) Apportion these Notes among three or more scholars to state their contents, and ask the others to make any additions that are necessary in order to

bringing out all the facts referred to. The class will then have before it a general survey of the ground covered during the quarter.

(4) Afterwards go rapidly over the more complete outline of the history as suggested by the questions and Scripture references in the lesson itself. For special information concerning the points raised, refer to the Library Extracts in the MANUAL during the quarter, and make use of such portions of them as may seem best, adding any suggestions that may occur to you concerning the practical lessons of this history. This will finish the review proper.

§ 249. **Important Points to be Aimed at in the General Survey.** (1) Make it a *rapid* survey of the entire period covered in the lessons, and of the successive steps of progress in the history.

(2) Note that the time covered is about fifteen years, and that for the first five years the gospel was confined exclusively to Jerusalem, while during the remaining ten years it spread farther and farther from Jerusalem until it reached Antioch in Syria.

(3) Mark the characteristics of the primitive church in Jerusalem, its extraordinary prosperity which not even spasmodic exhibitions of hostility on the part of the rulers could check; its practical exhibition of Christian love and brotherhood which not even the sin of Ananias and Sapphira could mar; and its internal unity and peace which not even unfair discriminations against Hellenist widows could permanently disturb.

(4) Point out how the ministry of Stephen formed the transition between Parts I and II; how this ministry itself was included in the first Part while its results determined the character of the second, in that it precipitated the general persecution which extended the church beyond Jerusalem, which took Saul on his memorable journey to Damascus, and which eventually brought about the establishment of a Gentile church in Antioch.

(5) Note carefully the steps of progress as the gospel passed beyond the limits of Jerusalem — throughout Judea and Samaria, and to Damascus, Phœnicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. It will be helpful to indicate these steps of progress by different colored pencils or crayons on an outline map drawn for that purpose.

(6) Show how the Jewish Christians were prepared by the experiences of Peter at Joppa and at Cæsarea for the admission of Gentiles into the church, and how this innovation, so opposed to Jewish prejudices, was first made on a large scale at Antioch through the preaching of certain Hellenists, followed by the work of Barnabas and Saul.

(7) Observe that these various steps of progress constituted a divine preparation for the next momentous step — the direct evangelization of the Gentile world through the missionary labors of Paul and others who aided him in the task.

(8) Call attention, finally, to the general character of the Jewish Christian churches about the middle of the first century, as reflected in the epistle of James, and note the moral difficulties against which Christianity had to contend.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS

ON

THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 14.—THE PERSECUTION BY HEROD. The Killing of James, the Brother of John, and the Miraculous Deliverance of Peter.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 250. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the object and results of the first attack on the church by the civil authority; and incidentally to bring to notice God's care for Peter, the combined faith and faithlessness of the church, and the dreadful death of Herod Agrippa I.

§ 251. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Read attentively the narrative in Acts; and also gather what information is available elsewhere concerning Herod Agrippa I.

(2) Note that this was the first persecution of the church by the secular power, and that its object was to strengthen the king's popularity with the ecclesiastical authorities, and with the fanatical Jews generally.

(3) Show that the seizure of the apostle James, who was conspicuous as one of the leaders of the church, was apparently so sudden and unexpected that the church did not comprehend its tragic significance until shocked by the news of his execution.

(4) Notice furthermore that this experiment for testing the feelings of the Jews proved so satisfactory, that Peter was immediately seized and imprisoned, and would probably have shared a similar fate but for the respite occasioned by the sanctity of the Passover week, during which executions were not permitted.

(5) Picture the unspeakable distress and anxiety of the church during this week, their importunate appeals to that divine Helper from whom alone rescue could come, and their amazement and joy when Peter himself stood among them and recounted the marvelous deliverance which he had experienced.

(6) Call attention, finally, to the terrible death of Herod himself shortly afterwards as a divine judgment for his blasphemous impiety.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE MARTYRDOM OF JAMES, AND PETER'S MIRACULOUS RELEASE.

§ 252. **The Rise of Herod Agrippa I.** When Herod Agrippa I. ascended the throne of Herod the Great, he had already passed through an eventful and adventurous career. He was born in B.C. 10, as the son of Aristobulus, who was executed in A.D. 7, and Berenice, a daughter of Salome and Costobar. Shortly before the death of his grandfather he was, while a boy scarcely six years old, sent for his education to Rome. His mother Berenice was there treated in a friendly manner by Antonia, the widow of the elder Drusus, while the young Agrippa himself became attached to the younger Drusus, the son of the Emperor Tiberius. . . . When by the death of Drusus, which took place in A.D. 23, he lost support and favour at court, he found himself obliged to leave Rome and go back again to Palestine. He betook himself to Malatha, a stronghold in Idumea, and meditated committing suicide. . . . [After various adventures, Agrippa] in the spring of A.D. 36, and on the island of Capri presented himself before Tiberius. The emperor entrusted him with the oversight of his grandson Tiberius. He became particularly intimate with Caius Caligula, the grandson of his patroness Antonia, who afterwards became emperor. . . .

With the death of Tiberius and the accession of Caligula began for Agrippa the period of his good fortune. Caligula . . . conferred upon him what had been the tetrarchy of Philip, and that also of Lysanias, with the title of king. . . . It was not before autumn of A.D. 38 that he went back by way of Alexandria to Palestine, that he might set in order the affairs of his kingdom. . . . In the autumn of [A.D. 40] . . . we find Agrippa once more at Rome or Puteoli, . . . in the company of Caligula, and [he] was still present in Rome when his patron, on 24th January A.D. 41, was murdered by Chærea, and contributed not a little to secure the succession to the throne of the Caesars of the feeble Claudius. . . . The new emperor was obliged, in return, not only to confirm him in the possessions which he had previously, but also to add to these Judea and Samaria; so that Agrippa now united under his sway the whole territory of his grandfather. — *Schürer*: Jewish people, 1st Div., vol. ii, pp. 150–154.

§ 253. **Herod's Attitude toward the Pharisees.** [By many] displays of piety he gave abundant satisfaction to the people who were under the guidance of the Pharisees. This was shown in a very striking manner when, at the Feast of Tabernacles in A.D. 41, according to the old custom, he read the Book of Deuteronomy, and in the passage, "Thou mayest not set a stranger over thee that is not thy brother" (Deut. 17:15), he burst forth into tears, because he felt himself referred to in it. Then cried out the people to him, "Be not grieved, Agrippa! Thou art our brother! Thou art our brother!" . . .

That Agrippa's Pharisaic piety was a real conviction of the heart is, in view of his earlier life, not in the least probable. He who had spent fifteen years in gaiety and debauchery is not one of whom it could be expected that in the evening of his days he should from hearty conviction assume the Pharisaic yoke. Besides this, we have the most certain proofs that the king's Jewish piety was maintained only within the limits of the Holy Land. . . . From a survey of all the facts it is evident that his concessions to Pharisaism were purely matters of policy. Upon the whole he was a careful imitator of the old Herod, "only milder in disposition and somewhat more sly." — *Schürer*: Jewish People, 1st Div., vol. ii, pp. 157, 160, 162, 163.

§ 254. **Persecution by Herod: Its Political Origin and Significance.** At this time they [the Christians] had become equally distasteful to every section

of the Jews, being regarded not only as fanatics, but as apostates, some of whom sat loosely to the covenant which God had made with their fathers. To extirpate the Christians would, as Agrippa was well aware, be the cheapest possible way to win general popularity. It was accordingly about the very time of the visit of the two Apostles to the Passover, as delegates from Antioch, that "he laid hands on certain of the Church to injure them; and he slew James, the brother of John, with the sword; and seeing that it was pleasing to the Jews, proceeded to arrest Peter also." Thus in a single touch does St. Luke strike the keynote of Agrippa's policy, which was an unscrupulous desire for such popularity as could be earned by identifying himself with Jewish prejudices. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 175.

§ 255. **James, the Martyred Apostle.** St. James the Apostle . . . was the brother of John and the son of Zebedee. . . . There is very little told us concerning his life and actions. . . . He was clearly remarkable for his Christian privileges. He was one of the apostles specially favoured by our Lord. He was admitted by Him into the closest spiritual converse. Thus we find that, with Peter and John, James the Apostle was one of the three selected by our Lord to behold the first manifestation of His power over the realms of the dead when He restored the daughter of Jairus to life: with the same two, Peter and John, he was privileged to behold our Saviour receive the first foretaste of His heavenly glory upon the Mount of Transfiguration; and with them too he was permitted to behold his great Master drink the first draught of the cup of agony in the garden of Gethsemane. . . . When Herod wished to harass and vex the Church he selected James the brother of John as his victim; and we may be sure that with the keen instinct of a persecutor Herod selected not the least prominent and useful, but the most devoted and energetic champion of Christ to satisfy his cruel purpose. . . . We know nothing of the good works and brave deeds and powerful sermons he devoted to his Master's cause. We are told simply of the death by which he glorified God. All else is hidden with God till that day when the secret thoughts and deeds of every man shall be revealed. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 168-170; see also §§ 229-231, 236, Lesson 12, Manual.

§ 256. **The Martyrdom of James.** [James was killed] with the sword, that is, by beheading. This was accounted a specially disgraceful mode of punishment among the Jews. It is a noticeable fact that this James asked for a first place in Christ's kingdom, and declared in response to Christ's questioning, that he was able to drink of Christ's cup and be baptized with Christ's baptism; and that he was the first apostle to suffer a martyr's death, and the only apostle of whose death the N. T. gives us any account. It is also noteworthy that Luke, who gives a full account of the circumstances of Stephen's death, sums up that of James, the apostle, in a single sentence. — *Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 138b.

§ 257. **The Arrest and Imprisonment of Peter.** (1) It was before the Passover that James had been doomed to feel the tyrant's sword. The universal approbation of the fact by the Jews—an approbation which would be all the more conspicuous from the presence of the vast throngs who came to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover—stimulated the king, to whom no incense was so sweet as the voice of popular applause, to inflict a blow yet more terrible by seizing the most prominent of all the Apostles. Peter was accordingly arrested, and since there was no time to finish his trial before the Passover, and the Jews were not inclined to inflict death by their own act during the Feast, he was kept in prison till the seven sacred days had elapsed that he might then be put to death with the most ostentatious publicity. Day after day the Apostle remained in close custody, bound by either arm to two soldiers, and guarded by two others. Aware how irreparable would be the loss of one so brave, so true, so gifted with spiritual

fervour and wisdom, the Christians of Jerusalem poured out their hearts and souls in prayer for his deliverance. But it seemed as if it would be in vain. The last night of the Feast had come; the dawn of the morning would see Peter brought forth to the mockery of trial, and the certainty of death.—*Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 176, 177.

(2) The picture of the calm repose of the Apostle as one to whom God had given the sleep of His beloved, undisturbed by the fear of coming suffering and death, will be felt by most readers to be one of singular interest.—*Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 195*b*.

§ 258. **Roman Prison Guard.** The Roman mode of chaining prisoners was adopted in this case, and was the following: "The soldier who was appointed to guard a particular prisoner had the chain fastened to the wrist of his left hand, the right remaining at liberty. The prisoner, on the contrary, had the chain fastened to the wrist of his right hand. The prisoner, and the soldier who had the care of him, were said to be tied to one another. Sometimes, for greater security, the prisoner was chained to two soldiers, one on each side of him." . . . The *first watch* was a single soldier, before the door, and the *second* another at the iron gate, and . . . these two soldiers, with the two by the side of Peter, made up the quaternion then on duty. . . . The soldiers in such a case were answerable for the safety of the prisoner, and, if he escaped, were liable to suffer the punishment which would have been inflicted on him.—*Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 151, 152, 154.

§ 259. **Peter's Miraculous Deliverance.** The time was the night which preceded the day on which Peter was to be exhibited to the people. . . . Two sentinels . . . occupied the interior of the cell, and the prisoner was tied to them; the others stood before the door, and thus the four men composing the company were all on guard at the same time. Then an (not *the*) angel of the Lord suddenly stood at the side of the sleeper, and celestial light shone in the place. . . . The angel awakens the sleeper by smiting him on the side, and the chains at once fall from the hands of the latter. The angel now commands him to resume, first of all, the articles of clothing which he had laid aside in order to sleep more comfortably—the girdle, sandals, and upper garment, and then directs him to follow. Thus Peter, walking behind the angel, first passes beyond the door of his prison-cell, without as yet being conscious that all that occurred was real, since it appeared to be a vision seen in a dream, vs. 9. Both passed through the first and second guard; and here the term "to go through" suggests that each station was occupied not merely by one man, but by several, so that it was possible to pass through or *between* them. . . . They reached, at length, the iron gate, which conducted them from the precincts of the building into the city; after it had opened spontaneously to them . . . , they entered an open place, and continued to walk together along one street; but then the angel suddenly disappeared from the side of the apostle.—*Lechler*: In Lange's Commentary, Acts, p. 228*b*.

"THE POWER OF PRAYER, AND THE WEAKNESS OF FAITH."

§ 260. **The Midnight Prayer-meeting.** (1) This was a midnight assembly of the Christians, either for fear of their Jewish enemies, or more probably on account of the pressing necessity and importance of the case. The primitive Christians in those times of peril held their sacred assemblies in the night season; and afterwards in peaceful times these nocturnal assemblies were continued, owing to their greater solemnity, and on account of a prevalent persuasion that the Lord Jesus would come during the night.—*Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. i, pp. 419, 420.

(2) When St. Peter was released "he came to the house of Mary, where many were gathered together and were praying," though the night must have been far advanced. . . . And [yet] . . . how true to nature their scepticism! They were gathered praying for Peter's release, but so little did they expect an answer to their prayers that, when the answer does come, and in the precise way that they were asking for it and longing for it, they are astonished, and tell the maid-servant who bore the tidings, "Thou art mad." — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 175, 182.

§ 261. **The Theory of Guardian Angels.** The language ["it is his angel"] expresses the common belief of the Jews, that every true Israelite had a guardian angel specially assigned to him, who, when he appeared in human form, assumed the likeness of the man whom he protected. It is obvious that the record of the casual utterance of such a belief cannot be taken as an authoritative sanction of it. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 197*b*, 198*a*.

HEROD'S MISERABLE DEATH.

§ 262. **The Festival at Cæsarea, and the Death of Herod.** The country did not long enjoy his [Herod's] rule. After he had reigned little more than three years, if we reckon from A.D. 41, he died at Caesarea very suddenly in A.D. 44. The two accounts of his death which we have, in Acts 13: 19-23, and Josephus, *Antiq.* xix. 8. 2, with many variations, are yet in thorough and detailed agreement on the principal points.

The Acts of the Apostles relates that in Caesarea, sitting on the judgment-seat dressed in his royal robes, he delivered an oration to the ambassadors representing the citizens of Tyre and Sidon, with whom, we know not why, he had been displeased. While he was speaking the people called out: It is the voice of a god, and not of a man. Immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten up of worms, and gave up the ghost.

According to Josephus, he was present at Caesarea while games were being celebrated there in honour of the emperor. On the second day he appeared in the theatre in a robe which was made wholly of silver. When the robe sparkled in the sun, the flatterers cried out to him declaring that he was a god, and entreating that he would have mercy on them. The king allowed himself to be carried away by their flattery. Soon thereafter he saw an owl sitting upon a rope, which at once he accepted as a presage of a speedy death. He then knew that his hour had come. Immediately a most severe pain arose in his bowels. He had to be carried into the house, and in five days was a corpse.

It thus appears that the principal points: Caesarea as the scene of the incident, the brilliant robe, the flattering shout, the sudden death — are common to both narratives, although the details have been somewhat diversified in the course of transmission. — *Schürer*: Jewish People, 1st Div., vol. ii, pp. 163, 164.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 263. **The Evils of Union between Church and State.** A church established by law does not tolerate dissent when it is in position to suppress it. If the ecclesiastical power is the weaker it calls on the secular power to enforce its demands; if the latter is the weaker it is tempted to curry favor with the former by persecuting those who presume to differ from legal orthodoxy. In either case there is no freedom of thought.

§ 264. **The Bible not a Book of Biography.** One cannot but be impressed with the brevity of the account of the martyrdom of the apostle James,

compared with that of Stephen. The Biblical narrative never takes account of a man for his own sake, but only in so far as he stands related to the progress of the kingdom of God.

§ 265. **The Ministry of Angels.** We may not, as Peter, be permitted actually to behold the heavenly messengers "sent forth to do service for the sake of those who shall inherit salvation" (Heb. 1:14); but we may confidently believe that all who commit themselves to God for guidance and protection will have such share of his angelic service as God thinks best.

§ 266. **The Power of Prayer.** Peter's deliverance is a lesson to the church for all time on the potency of prayer. On one side were arrayed the powers of earth, prison bars, chains, lines of armed soldiers guarding every avenue of escape, and behind them all the power of the Roman empire. On the other side was a little band of timid men and women, poor, despised, without social or political influence, but strong in prayer, and in the consciousness that God was with them. The result might be delayed till the last moment, but it was sure.

§ 267. **Why so Little Answer to Prayer.** "We pray as the primitive Church did, and that constantly; but is it not with us as with them? We pray indeed, but we do not expect our prayers to be answered, and therefore we do not profit by them as we might." — *Stokes*.

§ 268. **The Death of James, and the Death of Herod.** Who would not rather have been the humble martyr in the prison, glorifying God in his death and glorified evermore among the redeemed in heaven, than Agrippa dazzling for a moment in his silver robe, but permanently tormented by an evil conscience, and finally smitten of God, the miserable victim of his own sins and vices. But these are only extreme cases of that great division of men into two classes, to one of which each individual belongs.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE LIFE AND CHARACTER OF HEROD AGRIPPA I: *Josephus*, Antiquities, vol. ii, Bk. xviii, ch. 6 — Bk. xix, ch. 9; *Ibid.*, Wars, vol. ii, Bk. ii, chs. 9, 11; *Schürer*, Jewish People in the Time of Christ, 1st Div., vol. ii, pp. 150-165. 2. DIFFERENT VIEWS ON PETER'S DELIVERANCE: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 231; *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. i, p. 418. 3. HEROD'S DISPLEASURE AT THE PHENICIANS: *Lange*, Commentary, Acts, p. 230.

Lesson 15. — CARRYING THE GOSPEL INTO CYPRUS AND ASIA MINOR. The Beginning of Paul's First Missionary Journey.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 269. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the church at Antioch through its leaders and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit was moved to enter upon the evangelization of the Gentile world, and to show how Barnabas and Saul, in pursuance of this divine leading, began their missionary work in Cyprus, and then continued it in Antioch of Pisidia.

§ 270. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson make faithful use of the map, so as to become familiar with the location of the places mentioned, and able to follow mentally the movements of the apostles from place to place.

(2) Recall briefly the steps of progress in the spread of the gospel, which resulted in the establishment of this Gentile church in Antioch of Syria, and note that this church, rather than the church in Jerusalem, was selected by the Holy Spirit as the most fit agency through which to evangelize the Gentile world.

(3) In connection with the work in Cyprus notice that its chief interest seems to center in the conversion of Sergius Paulus, the proconsul. Attention should be called to the three main facts connected with this event, the defeat of Bar-jesus the sorcerer, the accuracy of Luke as an historian, and the change of Saul's name to Paul.

(4) Follow the apostles from Paphos to Perga, and note the fact that at this point John Mark, who had accompanied the apostles from Antioch, turned back; also the fact that this may have been due to circumstances which necessitated such a radical change of plan that Mark for reasons satisfactory to himself, but apparently unsatisfactory to Paul (Acts 15 : 38), felt warranted in going no further.

(5) Describe the work in Antioch of Pisidia, the impression made by Paul's address, the jealousy of the Jews, the turning of the Gentiles to Christ, and the persecution instigated by the Jews which finally drove the apostles from Antioch.

(6) Note that notwithstanding this opposition the gospel had great success there, and that a permanent and flourishing church was the fruit of this visit by Barnabas and Saul.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

BARNABAS AND SAUL SENT FORTH.

§ 271. **Preparatory Work and Guiding Influence of the Holy Spirit.** [It is always] difficult to emancipate ourselves from the influence and ideas of bygone ages, and so it was with the Jewish Christians. They could not bring themselves to adopt missionary work among the Gentiles. They believed indeed intellectually that God had granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life, but that belief was not accompanied with any of the enthusiasm which alone lends life and power to mental conceptions. The Holy Ghost therefore, as the Paraclete, the loving Comforter, Exhorter, and Guide of the Church, interposes afresh, and by a new revelation ordains apostles whose great work shall consist in preaching to the Gentile world. . . .

All the circumstances . . . are typical. The Church was engaged in a special devotion when the Holy Ghost spoke. A special blessing was vouchsafed, as before at Pentecost, when the people of God were specially waiting for Him. The Church at Antioch as represented by its leading teachers were fasting and praying and ministering to the Lord when the Divine mandate was issued. — *Stokes* : Acts, vol. ii, pp. 192-194.

§ 272. **The Call to Evangelize the Gentiles : Paul and Barnabas Set Apart.** "Separate me *now* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have

called them," may have been an answer to specific prayers. How this revelation was made . . . ,—whether the route to be taken by Barnabas and Saul was at this time precisely indicated,—and whether they had previously received a conscious personal call, of which this was the public ratification,—it is useless to inquire. A definite work was pointed out, as now about to be begun under the counsel of God; two definite agents in this work were publicly singled out: and we soon see them sent forth to their arduous undertaking, with the sanction of the Church at Antioch.

Their final consecration and departure was the occasion of another religious solemnity. A fast was appointed, and prayers were offered up; and, with that simple ceremony of ordination . . . "they laid their hands on them, and sent them away." The words are wonderfully simple; but those who devoutly reflect on this great occasion, and on the position of the first Christians at Antioch, will not find it difficult to imagine the thoughts which occupied the hearts of the disciples during the first "Ember Days" of the Church,—their deep sense of the importance of the work which was now beginning,—their faith in God, on whom they could rely in the midst of such difficulties,—their suspense during the absence of those by whom their own faith had been fortified,—their anxiety for the intelligence they might bring on their return.—*Conybeare and Howson: St. Paul*, vol. i, pp. 133, 134.

THE WORK IN CYPRUS.

§ 273. *The Beginning of Paul's First Missionary Journey.* It is not stated that the Holy Spirit prescribed the details of the route. How then should Paul and Barnabas proceed? To leave Syria they must go first to Seleucia, the harbour of Antioch, where they would find ships going south to the Syrian coast and Egypt, and west either by way of Cyprus or along the coast of Asia Minor. The western route led towards the Roman world, to which all Paul's subsequent history proves that he considered himself called by the Spirit. The Apostles embarked in a ship for Cyprus, which was very closely connected by commerce and general intercourse with the Syrian coast. . . . We may feel fairly confident that in view of this great expedition the Apostles started early in the year, in April, when the season for navigation began. It is not possible to allow less than two months in Cyprus, where they preached in the Jewish synagogues along their route. We must allow a certain time in each of the Jewish settlements to enable the Apostles to test the feeling of the town before they proceeded on their way in search of a favourable opening; and yet . . . it is hardly consistent with the language [of the narrative] to suppose that they stayed very long at any place. Nothing of permanent interest occurred until they reached Paphos; and even there the words describing their experience do not suggest any prolonged stay.—*Ramsay: Church in Roman Empire*, pp. 60, 61.

§ 274. *Cyprus, a Senatorial Province, Ruled by a Proconsul.* There is an interesting illustration of the historical accuracy of St. Luke connected with the apostolic visit to Paphos and to Sergius Paulus the proconsul. Thrice over in the narrative of St. Luke, Sergius Paulus is called proconsul. . . . This has been the cause of much misunderstanding and of no small reproach hurled against the sacred writer. . . . The Roman provinces were divided into two classes, senatorial and imperial. The senatorial provinces were ruled by proconsuls appointed by the Senate; the imperial by proprætors appointed by the emperors. This arrangement was made by Augustus Cæsar, and is reported to us by Strabo who lived and wrote during St. Paul's early manhood. . . . Strabo gives us the list of the provinces senatorial and imperial alike, and expressly classes Cyprus

amongst the imperial provinces, which were ruled by proprætors and not by proconsuls. . . . Strabo tells us of the original arrangement made about thirty years B.C. . . . but he omits to tell us what another historian of the same century, Dion Cassius, does relate, that the same Emperor [Augustus] modified this arrangement five years later, handing Cyprus and Gallia Narbonensis over to the rule of the Senate, so that from that date and henceforth throughout the first century of our era Cyprus was governed by proconsuls alone, as St. Luke most accurately, though only incidentally reports. — *Stokes : Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 203, 204.

§ 275. **Confirmatory Evidence of Recent Excavations.** Cyprus has been thoroughly investigated since it passed into British hands, specially by General Cesnola who . . . tells us of a mutilated inscription which he recovered dealing with some subject of no special importance, but bearing . . . date as "Under Paulus the Proconsul"; proving to us by contemporary evidence that Sergius Paulus ruled the island, and ruled it with the special title of proconsul. Surely an instance like this . . . is quite enough to make fair minds suspend their judgment when charges of inaccuracy are alleged against St. Luke dependent upon our own ignorance alone of the entire facts of the case. — *Stokes : Acts*, vol. ii, p. 205.

§ 276. **The Character of Sergius Paulus.** The Proconsul is described by Luke as an intelligent person — in short, one of the *savans* of the day; and it is a strong confirmation of the accuracy of the description, that we find Pliny the Elder citing Sergius Paulus more than once as an authority on questions of natural philosophy. The same inquiring turn of mind that distinguished the Proconsul was transmitted to his posterity, for Galen speaks of a son (or grandson) of the same name in the most flattering terms: "Sergius Paulus, a man of the first stamp in all things, both in word and deed, as regards philosophy." — *Lewin : St. Paul*, vol. i, p. 127.

§ 277. **Sergius Paulus and Bar-jesus.** There resided at the court of the Proconsul at that time a Jewish impostor, by the name of Bar-jesus, whose surname was Elymas, or "the magician." . . . He [the proconsul] had probably listened, not without advantage, to the discourses even of Elymas, who, though a false teacher, and making a trade of religion, and practising on the credulity of the people by the knavish profession of supernatural powers, had yet communicated to the accomplished Roman many wholesome truths touching the nature and attributes of the Deity. . . . But the same thirst after knowledge which had led to the advancement of Elymas, now induced the governor to send for Barnabas and Saul. If so much light had been derived from the Jewish religion, what might not be expected from Christianity, which, it was said, was to fulfil and then supersede the dispensation of Moses! — *Lewin : St. Paul*, vol. i, pp. 127, 128.

§ 278. **Bar-jesus and Saul.** But the position of soothsayer to a Roman Proconsul . . . was too distinguished and too lucrative to abandon without a struggle. Elymas met the Apostles in open controversy, and spared neither argument nor insult in his endeavour to persuade Sergius of the absurdity of the new faith. Instantly Saul . . . came to the front to bear the full force of the sorcerer's opposition. . . . He stood up, as it were, in a flame of fire, his soul burning with inspired indignation, against a man whose cowardice, greed, and worthlessness he saw and wished to expose. Fixing on the false prophet and sorcerer that earnest gaze which was perhaps rendered more conspicuous by his imperfect sight, he exclaimed, "O full of all guile and villany, thou son of the devil, thou foe of all righteousness, cease, wilt thou, thy perversion of the Lord's straight

paths." And then, perceiving the terror produced on the mind of the unmasked hypocrite by this bold and blighting invective, he suddenly added, "And now, see, the Lord's hand is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind, not seeing the sun for a time." The denunciation instantly took effect; the sorcerer felt in a moment that his impostures were annihilated, that he stood in the presence of an avenging justice. A mist swam before his eyes, followed by total darkness, and groping with outstretched hands he began to seek for some one to lead and guide him. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 199.

§ 279. **The Conversion of Sergius Paulus.** Nor was it strange that a display of spiritual power so startling and so irresistible should produce a strong conviction on the mind of the Proconsul. How far his consequent belief was deep-seated or otherwise we have no evidence which would enable us to judge. But the silence of St. Luke would seem to indicate that he was not baptised, and we can hardly look on him as a deep and lifelong convert, since otherwise we should, in the rarity of great men in the Christian community, have as certainly heard of him in their records as we hear of the very few who at this period — like Flavius Clemens or Flavia Domitilla — joined the Church from the ranks of the noble or the mighty. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 199, 200.

§ 280. **Change of Name from Saul to Paul.** As the name Paul occurs in the narrative of the conversion of Sergius Paulus, . . . [Jerome] supposes that the change of name is connected with that event. . . . This hypothesis is, however, liable to various objections. It seems at variance with the modesty of the apostle. It is, besides, highly improbable that Sergius Paulus was Paul's first Gentile convert, as he had already preached for at least two years in Cilicia and Antioch; nor did he pay such extreme deference to rank as this hypothesis would imply. It was customary for the pupil to adopt the name of the teacher, but not the teacher to adopt the name of the pupil. Besides, it is to be observed that Luke introduces the change of name before he mentions the conversion of Sergius Paulus.

The more probable opinion is, that Paul, as a Hellenistic Jew and a Roman citizen, had two names — Saul being his Jewish name, and Paul his Roman. . . . It was then a usual thing for Hellenistic Jews to have two names; the one Hebrew, and the other Greek or Latin. . . . The change [in Luke's narrative] must have been intentional; and the common reason assigned seems sufficient, that Paul now came prominently forward as the apostle of the Gentiles. Hitherto his labours had been chiefly confined to the Jews, and hence Luke retained the name by which he was best known among them; but now he addresses himself to the Gentiles, and henceforth Luke mentions him only by his Gentile name. — *Glaag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 13, 14.

THE WORK IN ANTIOCH OF PISIDIA.

§ 281. **The Journey from Paphos to Perga.** After traversing the island [of Cyprus] from east to west, they must go onward. Ships going westward naturally went across to the coast of Pamphylia, and the Apostles, after reaching Paphos, near the west end of Cyprus, sailed in one of these ships, and landed at Attalia in Pamphylia. . . . It seems . . . a fair and natural interpretation of the document to place their arrival in Pamphylia in the latter part of June. Some slight stay in Perga is implied by the dissension which was caused by the proposal to cross Taurus to the upper country; then they proceeded to the interior without preaching at Perga or in Pamphylia. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 60, 61.

§ 282. **John Mark's Return to Jerusalem.** We can hardly suppose that [proceeding to the interior] . . . was part of the original scheme, for John Mark was willing to come into Pamphylia with them but was not willing to go on into the country north of the Taurus, and therefore he evidently considered that the latter proposal was a departure from the original scheme. Cyprus and Pamphylia were countries of similar situation to Cilicia and Syria, and in the closest possible relations with them, whereas it was a serious and novel step to go into the country north of the Taurus. We need not therefore suppose that John Mark was actuated solely or mainly by cowardice; the facts of the situation show that he could advance perfectly plausible arguments against the change of plan, which was to carry their work into a region new in character and not hitherto contemplated by the church. It seems no unwarrantable addition, but a plain inference from the facts, to picture the dissension as proceeding on lines like these; and it relieves John Mark from a serious charge, which is not quite in keeping with his boldness in originally starting on this first of missionary journeys. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 61, 62.

§ 283. **Reasons for Going to Antioch of Pisidia.** What then was the motive of Paul and Barnabas in taking this new step? . . . Was it that circumstances independent of their own will dictated this change? To this question Paul himself gives the answer. "Ye know," he says to the Galatians, "that because of an infirmity of the flesh I preached the gospel to you the first time" (Gal. 4: 13).

Every one who has travelled in Pamphylia knows how relaxing and enervating the climate is. In these low-lying plains fever is endemic; the land is so moist as to be extraordinarily fertile and most dangerous to strangers. Confined [on the north] by the vast ridges of Taurus, 5,000 to 9,000 feet high, the atmosphere is like the steam of a kettle, hot, moist, and swept by no strong winds. . . .

We suppose then that Paul caught fever on reaching Perga. . . . It was precisely after fatigue and hardship, travelling on foot through Cyprus amid great excitement and mental strain, that one was peculiarly liable to be affected by the sudden plunge into the enervating atmosphere of Pamphylia. The circumstances implied in the epistle are therefore in perfect keeping with the narrative in Acts. . . . The treatment for such an illness would be prescribed by universal consent as either the sea or the high lands of the interior. . . . In this way Paul and Barnabas were led to visit the Jewish settlement of Antioch, and the evangelisation of the Galatian churches was due to "an infirmity of the flesh." — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 62-64.

§ 284. **The Word Preached in Antioch.** From Perga they went to Antioch in Pisidia. Here, on the Sabbath, in the synagogue, at the invitation of its rulers, Paul delivered a discourse of eminent wisdom, mildness, and earnestness; reviewing the gracious dealings of God with Israel; announcing the appearance of the Messiah in the family of David, his death, and his resurrection; pointing the people to faith in him as the condition of pardon and justification; and concluding with an awful warning against unbelief. The discourse made an impression, and the apostle was urged to present his doctrine more fully on the ensuing Sabbath. In the mean time, the more teachable among the Jews and proselytes received more minute instructions; the news of the gospel spread to every house. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 243.

§ 285. **Envy of the Jews.** Paul and Barnabas Driven Away. On the next Sabbath the whole city, Gentiles and all, flocked to the synagogue. This roused the envy of the Jews, who made great account of their lineage and

privileges; and they interrupted Paul's discourse with violent contradiction and blasphemy. He then declared to them: "We were bound by the divine counsel, and by our duty as apostles, to preach the word of God to you first. But since ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles; according to the promise of the prophet, that the Messiah should be a light and the foundation of salvation for the nations to the ends of the earth." Then were the Gentiles glad; "as many as were ordained to eternal life," believed; and the word of God spread throughout the province of Pisidia. But the fanatical Jews succeeded in stirring up the honourable women, who leaned towards Judaism, and, through them, their husbands also; and they drove Paul and Barnabas away. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 243.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 286. **Prayer for Guidance Always Answered.** Whether the church at Antioch was definitely praying for guidance respecting the evangelization of the Gentiles, as seems probable, we do not know; but it is certain that prayer for divine guidance never fails to bring indications of God's will to those who are ready to follow where he leads the way.

§ 287. **The Disqualifying Power of Prejudices.** Unquestionably the disciples at Jerusalem were deeply interested in the spread of God's kingdom, yet their national prejudices, while not hindering their work among the Jews, formed for a time at least a barrier against their undertaking direct work among the Gentiles; therefore the glory of this work passed to another church.

§ 288. **Fidelity in Daily Duties is the Best Preparation for Larger Tasks.** As the Lord had prepared the church at Antioch to become the mother church of the Gentiles, so he had also prepared special instruments for this work. Yet notice, that this special preparation of Barnabas and Saul was received by them unconsciously in their faithful and large-hearted attention to work that had already come to them (*cf.* Mt. 25: 21).

§ 289. **The True Motive in Missionary Work.** Paul felt that the revelations which had been made to him, and the gospel that had been entrusted to him were not bestowed for his own comfort and salvation only; but that, having experienced their blessed power in his own soul, he might impart them to others who were perishing for want of them. In this sense we, as well as he, are debtors to all men, who have not the gospel.

§ 290. **The Constraining Impulse in All Christian Work.** This should be the love of Christ — not our weak and vacillating love for him — but his un-failing and omnipotent love for us.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PROPHETS AND TEACHERS IN THE CHURCH AT ANTIOCH: *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, p. 119; *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 3. 2. MANAËN: Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 201, 202. 3. HEROD THE TETRARCH: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 4, 5. 4. JOHN, WHOSE SURNAME WAS MARK: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, Art., "Mark"; *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, p. 119. 5. JEWISH MANNER OF READING THE SCRIPTURE: Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 169 ff.; *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 205-207. 6. CYPRUS, AS A CENTER FOR THE SPREAD OF CHRISTIANITY: *Ibid.*, pp. 195, 196. 7. FOR A FULL DISCUSSION OF ST. PAUL'S FIRST REPORTED SERMON: *Ibid.*, pp. 207-210.

**Lesson 16.—THE WORK IN ICONIUM, LYSTRA AND DERBE,
AND THE RETURN TO SYRIA. The Continuation and
Close of the First Missionary Journey.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 291. **Design of the Lesson.** To show some of the experiences of Barnabas and Paul in carrying the gospel into southern Galatia; and to note their return to Antioch in Syria, which completed the first missionary journey.

§ 292. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Call attention to the great advance made during the past four years in our knowledge of the physical geography, political divisions, and archæology of Asia Minor in the first century, and to the fact that the leading authority on these subjects to-day is Prof. W. M. Ramsay, whose volume on "The Church in the Roman Empire before A.D. 170," has compelled a radical revision of heretofore almost universally accepted opinions concerning Galatia, the Galatian churches, and Paul's missionary journeys.

(2) Notice Paul's relation to the provincial and the municipal jurisdictions; and that he did not, as generally imagined, when driven from any one city, cross the nearest frontier to escape the law; for his work in Asia Minor was almost wholly confined to the single province of Galatia.

(3) Observe that wherever Barnabas and Paul went they began their work by preaching in the synagogues, whereby they not only offered the gospel first of all to God's ancient people, but reached the large number of proselytes and devout persons who had attached themselves to the Jewish worship, and through whom, when forced to quit the synagogues, they could gain a stronger hold on the Gentiles themselves.

(4) Mark how gladly the Gentiles received the gospel, and how the apostles would apparently have been spared all hardship and peril but for the jealousy and hatred of the Jews who stirred up persecution against them in every place except Derbe.

(5) Note how this first missionary journey resulted in the establishment of four churches in Galatia, and how Barnabas and Paul, after having been driven from city to city, afterwards turned back and retraced their steps in order to strengthen and organize these churches and to comfort them in their trials.

(6) Picture, finally, the joy of the church at Antioch in Syria on hearing from their returned missionaries of the success with which the Lord had crowned their efforts to make known his grace among the Gentiles.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 293. **Paul, and the Local Jurisdictions.** [It is often said that] "the diversity of political governments which at this time prevailed in Asia Minor was

so far an advantage to the apostles that it rendered them more able to escape from one jurisdiction to another." In so far as it concerns antiquities, this view is against the evidence; and, when a correct map is before us, we see that Paul did not use the frontier, like the modern brigands in Turkish Macedonia, to "dodge the law." He did not go out of the Roman province, but found safety through the self-government of the various cities. He never came into collision with the Roman administration on this first journey, but only with the city officials; and the action of the magistrates of Antioch had no force beyond the territory that belonged to the city. — *Ramsay* : *Church in Roman Empire*, p. 45.

IN ICONIUM: SUCCESS AND PERSECUTION.

§ 294. **Iconium, a City of Phrygia.** Iconium was in early times a city of Phrygia, situated on the eastern frontier, where Phrygia borders on Lycaonia; but in later times it [was joined with the district of Lycaonia for governmental purposes; and as early as 100 B.C.] was called a city of Lycaonia. . . . [Its inhabitants, however, still clung to its ancient name, and called it a city of Phrygia; as for instance] in the year 163 A.D., Hierax, one of the Christians associated with Justin Martyr in his trial before the Prefect of Rome, Junius Rusticus, was asked by the judge who his parents were. He replied, "My earthly parents are dead; and I have come hither (*i.e.*, as a slave), torn away from Iconium of Phrygia."

By this single testimony of a native, preserved in such an accidental way, we are enabled to realise that the expression in Acts 14 : 6 [they "fled unto the cities of Lycaonia, Lystra and Derbe" which implies that Iconium was not a city of Lycaonia] was contrary to the general usage and peculiar to Iconium, and that it could hardly have occurred except to one who had actually lived in the city and caught the tone of its population. [This expression is, therefore, a strong incidental proof of the accuracy of the narrative in the Acts, and not, as has been alleged by some who have disregarded the local usage, an indication of its inaccuracy.] — *Ramsay* : *Church in Roman Empire*, pp. 37, 39.

§ 295. **The Work in Iconium.** The Apostles, on reaching Iconium, entered, as usual, on the Sabbath-day, into the synagogue of the Jews, who here also, as in other cities of importance, were no inconsiderable part of the population. Such was the force with which the missionaries spake, that a multitude of converts soon came over to the faith, both from Jews and Greeks. It was no time to stand neuter, and the unbelieving Jews exerted all their arts to bring the new doctrine into discredit. The Apostles, however, continued to preach the word at Iconium with great boldness, and miracles were wrought by their hands, by which the truth of the Gospel was confirmed. At length the whole city was divided — some taking part with the Jews, and some with the Apostles. Such a state of things could not last, and violence began. The Jews stirred up the Gentiles, including even the rulers of the city, against the religious innovations, and the Apostles were in danger of being stoned. However, they were appraised of the plot in time, and fled to Lystra, a city of Lycaonia. — *Lewin* : *St. Paul*, vol. i, pp. 145, 146.

§ 296. **The Legend of Paul and Thekla.** In connection with St. Paul's residence at Iconium, there exists a story of the conversion of a maiden named Thekla, of which the apocryphal "Acts of Paul and Thekla" represents the form into which the legend had grown in the fourth century. Thekla, who was espoused to Thamyris, is said to have been deeply affected by the preaching of the Apostle, which she accidentally heard, and when the Apostle was put in prison on the accusation of being a magician, she bribed the gaoler and visited the prisoner, and was fully instructed by him in the Christian faith. The Apostle was punished and

sent away from Iconium. Thecla was condemned to die for her refusal to marry Thamyris, but was miraculously saved, and after many troubles joined St. Paul in his missionary travels, and ultimately made her home in the neighbourhood of Seleucia, where she led the life of a nun till her death, which took place when she was ninety years old. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 175.

IN LYSTRA: WORSHIPED AND STONED.

§ 297. **The Site of Lystra.** Lystra is about six hours S. S. W. from Iconium. . . . The exact site of Lystra is on a hill in the centre of the valley. . . . The hill rises about 100 to 150 feet above the plain and the sides are steep. Few traces of ancient buildings remain above the surface. . . . Situated on this bold hill, Lystra could easily be made a very strong fortress, and must have been well situated for its purpose of keeping in check the tribes of the mountain districts that lie west and south of it. . . . For seventy years after its foundation it must have been a town of considerable consequence, proud of its Roman character and its superior rank. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 47, 49, 50.

§ 298. **The Miracle at Lystra.** We must suppose that Paul gathered groups of the Lystrians about him, and addressed them in places of public resort, as a modern missionary might address the natives of a Hindoo village. . . . On one of these occasions St. Paul observed a cripple, who was earnestly listening to his discourse. He was seated on the ground, for he had an infirmity in his feet, and had never walked from the hour of his birth. St. Paul looked at him attentively . . . [and] perceived "that he had faith to be saved." . . . Paul said before his idolatrous audience at Lystra, "Stand upright on thy feet." . . . The obedient alacrity in the spirit, and the new strength in the body, rushes together simultaneously. The lame man sprang up in the joyful consciousness of power he had never felt before, and walked like those who had never had experience of infirmity. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 190-192.

§ 299. **Worship Offered the Apostles.** (1) It is manifest that neither Paul nor Barnabas understood the cry of these Lycaonians ["the gods are come down to us in the likeness of men"]. If they had, we cannot suppose that they would have allowed a moment to elapse before they corrected the false impression which the words conveyed, and at which, when they came to know its purport, they expressed such horror. They, however, left the place where the multitude of listeners had been assembled, and departed to their own lodgings, without any knowledge of what the mistaken people were about to do. . . .

Nothing was more familiar to the heathen mind than the thought of the gods assuming shape and going about among mankind, and it has often been noticed that the scene of the legend of Baucis and Philemon related by Ovid, and in which Jupiter and Mercury are said to have wandered on earth and to have been received as guests by Baucis and Philemon, is laid in Phrygia, which province was close to Lycaonia. . . .

We can understand how the heathen people concluded that if any deity came to visit them with a beneficent purpose it would be that god Jupiter whose temple was before their city and to whom therefore their chief worship was paid. . . . It was to his priest that the people ran with their cry, and brought him, with all the preparations for a sacrifice, to the gate of the house where the Apostles were lodged. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 177, 178.

(2) It is not without a singular interest that we find one of Ovid's stories reappearing in the sacred pages of the Acts of the Apostles. In this instance, as in so many others, the Scripture, in its identical descriptions of the Heathen

world, presents "undesigned coincidences" with the facts ascertained from Heathen memorials. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, p. 190.

§ 300. **Paul's Ignorance of "the Speech of Lycaonia."** It will be admitted by all who are not under the influence of a theory that this serves almost as a crucial instance, showing that the "gift of tongues," which St. Paul possessed so largely, did not consist in a supernatural knowledge of every provincial *patois* with which he came in contact. It is clear that he might easily have learnt afterwards from those who knew both languages [Greek and Lycaonian], the meaning of what at the time was unintelligible. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 224*a*.

§ 301. **Paul Stoned and Left for Dead.** (1) The crude, sensuous superstition of these heathens readily accounts for their sudden change from idolatrous veneration to the opposite extreme of fanatical hatred towards the enemies of their gods. At the instigation of Jews, who had come from Antioch in Pisidia and from Iconium, the people rose against Paul in a mob, stoned him, and dragged him out of the city for dead. But he revived, and, spending the rest of the day with the believers in Lystra, he and Barnabas went the next day to Derbe. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 244.

(2) The impression which the narrative leaves is certainly that Paul recovered from his stoning through a miracle; for it could have been nothing less than a miracle, that he who was stoned until his enemies were satisfied that he was dead, should be able to rise up of his own accord, walk into the city, and the next day depart for Derbe. — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 56, 57.

FROM DERBE BACK TO SYRIA.

§ 302. **The Site of Derbe.** The site of Derbe is not established on such certain evidence as that of Lystra. . . . Gudelissin is the only site in this district where a city of the style of Derbe, the stronghold of "the robber Antipater," could be situated. . . . It now presents a bare and poor appearance. . . . Derbe was the frontier city of the Roman province on the south-east, and on this account a certain importance attached to it. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 54, 55.

§ 303. **The Work at Derbe.** A few hours would be sufficient for the journey hither [from Lystra]. We have now reached the eastern limit of the present expedition. . . . [They] *made many disciples* as the result of the preaching mentioned [in vs. 21]. One of the converts was probably Gaius, who is called a Derbean in 20: 4. Their labours in this city appear to have been unattended by any open opposition. Hence, in 2 Tim. 3: 11, Paul omits Derbe from the list of places associated in the mind of Timothy with the "persecutions, afflictions," which the apostles had been called to endure. . . . The Epistle, therefore, in the names of the cities, in the order in which they are enumerated, and in the place at which the enumeration stops, corresponds exactly with the history. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 178, 179.

§ 304. **The Return to Syria. Confirming the Disciples.** [The close of the work at Derbe] brings us at least to the end of November. After that season the passes over the Taurus are liable to be blocked by snow, and are at best very trying and difficult to cross. What, then, were the Apostles to do? The journey across Taurus was described to them as impossible. They were at the extremest limit of Roman territory, and could not go further forward to preach, except by entering the kingdom of Antiochus. . . . In this situation the Apostles resolved to

return by the way they had come, and to take the opportunity of organising the administration of the newly founded communities, all of which they had been obliged to leave quite suddenly. . . . The rest of the winter then was spent in Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch. . . . It was not before the middle of May in the following year that the Apostles could venture to cross the Pisidian mountains. They perhaps spent June in Perga, and in July . . . they may have reached the Syrian Antioch once more. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 69, 70, 72.

§ 305. **Elders in the Early Church.** Whether Paul and Barnabas appointed the presbyters in this case by their own act solely, or ratified a previous election of the churches made at their suggestion, is disputed. If it be clear from other sources that the primitive churches elected their officers by general suffrage, the verb here may be understood to denote a concurrent appointment, in accordance with that practice; but the burden of proof lies on those who contend for such a modification of the meaning. . . . The term is plural, because each church had its college of elders; not because there was a church in each of the cities. The *elders* or *presbyters*, in the official sense of the term, were those appointed in the first churches to watch over their general discipline and welfare. With reference to that duty, they were called . . . superintendents, or bishops. The first was their Jewish appellation, transferred to them perhaps from the similar class of officers in the synagogues; the second was their foreign appellation, since the Greeks employed it to designate such relations among themselves. In accordance with this distinction, we find the general rule to be this: those who are called elders in speaking of Jewish communities are called bishops in speaking of Gentile communities. Hence the latter term is the prevailing one in Paul's Epistles. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 179, 180.

§ 306. **The Report to the Church at Antioch.** Antioch was the centre whence Paul and Barnabas had issued forth to preach among the Gentiles, and to Antioch the apostles returned to cheer the Church with the narrative of their labours and successes, and to restore themselves and their exhausted powers with the sweetness of Christian fellowship, or brotherly love and kindness such as then flourished, as never before or since, among the children of men. Mission work such as St. Paul did on this great tour is very exhausting. . . . The best restorative . . . when so exhausted is conversation and intercourse with men of like minds, such as St. Paul found when, returning to Antioch, he cheered the hearts and encouraged the hopes of the Church by narrating the wonders he had seen done and the triumphs he had seen won through the power of the Holy Ghost. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 217, 218.

§ 307. **Summary of the First Missionary Journey.** They [Paul and Barnabas] had preached the gospel in the island of Cyprus, and had visited the three Asiatic districts of Pamphylia, Pisidia, and Lycaonia. Besides individual conversions, they had founded at least four Christian churches in the cities of Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They had thus materially extended the gospel, although the space traversed was small compared with the countries visited by Paul in his second and third missionary journeys. The time spent in this journey is a matter of uncertainty. . . . It was at the close of the year 44 that Paul returned from Jerusalem to Antioch; and it was about the year 51 (fourteen years after his conversion, Gal. 2:1) that he again went up to Jerusalem (Acts 15:2). Six years, then, were spent in Antioch, and in this missionary journey; but how the time is to be divided is uncertain. It would appear that the greater part of it was spent in the journey. They traversed the whole of Cyprus; they continued so long in Pisidian Antioch, that we are informed the word of the Lord was diffused throughout the whole region; at Iconium we are told that they

remained a long time; at Lystra their stay must have been considerable, for time must be allowed for their success, for its fame to have reached the cities of Pisidian Antioch and Iconium, and for the hostile Jews to come from these cities. Nor could their stay at Derbe have been short, for there they made many disciples. Although, then, the space traversed was not extensive, yet, considering the length of their residence in each city, and the time which the history allows us, the period occupied might be about three or four years (A.D. 45-48). — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 63.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 308. **The Purpose of the Apostolic Miracles.** In the first century when every heathen belief tried to substantiate itself by alleged miracles, and when deception and imposture flourished on every hand, it would seem that Christianity also needed for its progress such incontestable manifestations of divine power as would show it to be from God and not from man. After eighteen hundred years of history Christianity is able to appeal to stronger evidence than miracles.

§ 309. **The Fickleness of Popular Favor.** The same blind and unreasoning impulse that prompted the crowd at Lystra to offer divine honors to Paul and Barnabas, as quickly and completely turned the populace against them. A crowd is easily excited, and when excited never stops to reason. It dethrones its idols as quickly as it erects them.

§ 310. **Heathen *versus* Christian Conceptions of the Incarnation.** Heathenism has much to say about men working their way up to the gods. The gods of Greece and Rome were, in truth, but superhuman men with human failings, who were supposed at rare intervals to visit the earth in semblance of men. Christianity alone presents a God who is in all and over all, the Creator of all things, who has in very deed assumed human nature, lived man's life, and died man's death, in order that he might provide redemption for all men from sin and death and lift them into fellowship with God.

§ 311. **Other Obstacles than Persecution.** Those who enter the service of Christ to-day in our own and in some other Christian lands may not have to endure bodily persecutions. Some of our hardest struggles are against prosperity rather than against adversity. Strength comes from resistance; paralysis and death come with inaction.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. POLITICAL DIVISIONS OF ASIA MINOR: *Ramsay*, The Church in the Roman Empire, pp. 13-15, note.
2. LOCALITIES OF THE FIRST JOURNEY: *Ibid.*, ch. 2.
3. SIMILARITY OF THE MIRACLE IN ACTS 14: 10 AND 3: 2: Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 177; *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, p. 191.
4. FACTS CONCERNING JUPITER AND MERCURY: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 52; *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 160, 161.
5. THE REVELATION OF GOD IN NATURE: *Olhausen*, Commentary, Acts, vol. iv, pp. 516, 517; *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, p. 162.
6. THE ACTS OF PAUL AND THEKLA: Ante-Nicene Fathers, vol. viii, pp. 487-492.
7. FOR A CRITICAL ESTIMATE OF THE SAME: *Ramsay*, The Church in the Roman Empire, ch. 16.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 17.—THE COUNCIL IN JERUSALEM. The Beginning of
the Conflict Concerning the Gentiles and the Jewish Law.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 312. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the relation of the Gentile converts to the Mosaic law became a most perplexing question in the early church, and how it received its first practical, though only partial, solution in the decision of the council at Jerusalem.

§ 313. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Try to form a clear conception of the attitude of the Jews of that day to the Gentile world around them; how they regarded themselves as the elect of God on whom he showered his exclusive privileges and blessings; how they regarded the Gentiles as little better than dogs, unclean, with whom the slightest social intercourse was defiling; and how they held that a convert from the Gentiles could not enter into the full privileges of the Jew until the tenth generation.

(2) Recall how the Holy Spirit had tried to break down these false and arrogant discriminations by the revelations to Peter at Joppa, and by Peter's further experiences when preaching to Cornelius at Cæsarea, and how these facts had for the time silenced the criticism of the church in Jerusalem.

(3) Note that national prejudices, so violent and deeply rooted as those of the Jews, could not be broken down by a mere revelation to one of the apostles, but that as soon as Barnabas and Paul returned from their first missionary journey, with their account of the entrance of large numbers of Gentiles directly into the church, these prejudices reasserted themselves, and caused great trouble in the church at Antioch, which it was found impossible to arrest except by an appeal to the apostles and the mother church in Jerusalem.

(4) Show Paul's wisdom in the measures adopted by him to prepare the leaders of the church in Jerusalem for the final public discussion, so that when this came it did not end in a vain and violent debate, but led to such a calm and

unprejudiced presentation of facts and principles as made united action and a right decision possible.

(5) Observe that the council did not attempt to decide the broad question of the relation of Christianity to Judaism, but only the immediate question of the relation of the Gentiles to the Jewish ritual law; observe also that most of the restrictions put upon the Gentiles were not demanded as conditions of salvation, but as concessions in the interest of friendliness and peace.

(6) Picture the joy with which victory for the Gentiles was greeted not only at Antioch but in all the churches where Paul afterwards carried the decree; but note that even this decision was but the partial solution of a question that could be disposed of finally only by a broad and thorough discussion of the principles that lay at the foundation of Christianity as compared with Judaism.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE OCCASION OF THE COUNCIL IN JERUSALEM.

§ 314. **Judaizers at Antioch.** The first intimation that we have that the trouble about the observance of the law was becoming acute is in the fifteenth chapter of Acts. This must have been about the year 49 [50 or 51] A.D. "And certain men came down from Judæa and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised after the custom of Moses, ye cannot be saved" (15:1). These were the "Judaizers." . . . This declaration raised a great commotion among the Gentile Christians in Antioch. Some of them had for years been watching with great joy and confident expectation for the return of Christ. We can easily imagine their consternation when they were told that they would certainly be excluded from his kingdom if they did not keep the law. All their hopes were blasted. . . . The struggle was a serious one, and it must have shaken the church to its very foundation, for there was "no small dissension and questioning with them" about this important matter. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 140, 141.

§ 315. **The Source of the Jewish Opinion Regarding the Permanence of the Mosaic Law.** This opinion of the strict Jewish Christians is more plausible than in our times we are disposed to imagine, a circumstance which accounts for the numerous and obstinately conducted controversies that existed in the primitive church regarding this point. . . . When you proceed upon the divine original of the Old Testament, and consider the strong declarations which it makes regarding the perpetual obligation of its ordinances, and the curses which it pronounces upon those who disregard them, when you take into consideration the declarations of Christ himself, for example in Matthew 5:17, 18, apparently to the very same effect; then you can readily comprehend how persons of a somewhat anxious and timid disposition might be not able to soar up to the free spiritual view of the law, which Paul, with all the might of the Spirit, vindicated. — *Olshausen*: Commentary, Acts, vol. iv, p. 520.

§ 316. **The Test Question: On what Terms might Gentiles Enter the Church?** Let us define clearly the great question which now arises. It is not as to whether Gentiles shall be admitted into the kingdom of God: on that point everyone was agreed. The question was, *On what terms* were they to be admitted? Was it necessary to become a Jew in order to be a Christian? Must one

pass through Judaism to reach the Gospel? This was the point at issue. Those who upheld the eternal claims of the old religion would, of necessity, impose circumcision on the Gentiles; for it was only through circumcision that they could be materially incorporated with the elect people, and become members of the family of Abraham. Accordingly, it was over circumcision that the great battle came to be fought. — *Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, p. 125.

§ 317. **The Journey to Jerusalem.** [The visit of the Judaizers to Antioch] resulted in a general anxiety and perplexity among the Syrian Christians. . . . It was determined, therefore, "that Paul and Barnabas, with certain others, should go up to Jerusalem unto the Apostles and elders about this question." It was well known that those who were disturbing the peace of the Church had their head-quarters in Judæa. . . . The residence of the principal Apostles was at Jerusalem, and the community over which "James" presided was still regarded as the Mother-Church of Christendom. In addition to this mission with which St. Paul was entrusted by the Church at Antioch, he received an intimation of the Divine Will communicated by direct revelation [Gal. 2: 2*a*]. . . .

It would seem that his companions were carefully chosen with reference to the question in dispute. On the one hand was Barnabas, a Jew and "a Levite" by birth, a good representative of the church of the circumcision. On the other hand was Titus, now first mentioned in the course of our narrative, a convert from heathenism, an uncircumcised "Greek." . . . Their course was along the great Roman Road, which followed the Phœnician coast-line . . . through the midland districts of Samaria and Judæa. . . . It seems evident that many of the heathen Syro-Phœnicians had been converted to Christianity: for as Paul and Barnabas passed through, "declaring the conversion of the Gentiles, they caused great joy unto all the brethren." As regards the Samaritans, we cannot be surprised that they who, when Philip first "preached Christ unto them," had received the glad tidings with "great joy," should be ready to express their sympathy in the happiness of those who, like themselves, had recently been "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel." — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 210-212.

THE DEBATE IN THE COUNCIL.

§ 318. **The Composition of the Council; St. Paul's Preliminary Interview with the Leading Men in the Church.** This assembly is often called the first Christian Council; but we must use some license to apply the term in that way, since a council consists properly of delegates from various churches, whereas two churches only are represented on this occasion. *The apostles and elders* are mentioned on account of their rank, not as composing the entire assembly. . . . In Gal. 2: 2, Paul states that, besides the communication which he made to the believers in a body, he had also a private interview with the chief of the apostles. This interview, we may suppose, preceded the public discussion. The object of it appears to have been, to put the other apostles in full possession of his views, and of all the facts in relation to his ministry among the heathen; so that, fortified by their previous knowledge of the case, he might have their support in the promiscuous assembly, where prejudice or misunderstanding might otherwise have placed him in a false light. — *Hackett* : Commentary, Acts, p. 184.

§ 319. **The Conflict between Christianity and Judaism.** It was not to be expected that the old principle would yield to the new without conflict. The astonishing success of the mission to the Gentiles caused, no doubt, more embarrassment than pleasure at Jerusalem. The old Judaism felt that its venerable

claims were in jeopardy; and it could not maintain and defend them without endeavouring to enforce them on others. . . .

Christianity and Judaism were now contending for their existence. If the Gentiles enter the Church directly, and there obtain through faith alone the same rank and privileges as the Jews, what becomes of the rights of Israel? what advantage has the elect people over other nations? Is not this utterly to deny the absolute validity of Judaism? On the other hand, if circumcision be imposed on the Gentile converts, is not that itself a declaration that faith in Christ is insufficient for salvation? Does it not reduce the Gospel to the position of a mere accessory to Mosaism? Is not this to deny the absolute validity of the work of Jesus Christ? . . . Betwixt the two parties, the Twelve are eclipsed. They appear full of anxiety and hesitation, seeking for a reconciliation between the two hostile principles, which could not be other than precarious.—*Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, pp. 125, 126.

§ 320. **Speeches in the Council.** [After] considerable sharp questioning and discussion . . . Peter rose to speak. He reminded them that God had taught him to make no distinctions of this kind; that, as a matter of fact, even there in Palestine, Gentiles had been converted, and that Jews as well as they might hope to be saved only “through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.” The great audience was silent. Peter’s argument was unanswerable. In a few moments Barnabas addressed the assembly and also Paul, both of whom related the wonderful things God had done through them on their recent missionary tour in Pisidia and Lycaonia.

But there was still another whose opinion was waited for by the multitude,—the pastor of the Jerusalem church, “James the Just.” . . . The Pharisaic Christians respected his judgment, as did also those who had adopted the larger and more spiritual view of Christianity. This man “now came forward, and solemnly pronounced that the Mosaic rites were not of eternal obligation,” and that the Gentile Christians ought not to be troubled about them; that if they abandoned the worship of idols and the immoral practices to which they had been accustomed, and believed on the Lord Jesus, it was enough. This carried the assembly.—*Taylor* : St. Paul, pp. 158, 159.

THE DECISION ADOPTED AND SENT FORTH.

§ 321. **The Decision of the Council.** The first and most important was that the law is not binding on the Gentile Christians. In this Paul was completely victorious. It was this principle for the recognition of which he was laboring, and it was here fully conceded. James, Peter and John recognized that Paul and Barnabas were true preachers of the true gospel. They had been intrusted with the gospel to the Gentiles, and God had recognized their work by blessing it with success. For their preaching among the heathen had been attended with the same signs and results as that of the other apostles among the Jews.

The second decision was to the effect that this gospel of Paul was for the heathen alone and not for the Jews (Gal. 2:9). Paul might preach to the Gentiles without demanding of them the observance of the law, but that was not the gospel for the Jews. He might preach to the Jews, but he must not teach them to disregard the law of Moses. In other words, they divided the mission field according to nationality. They thereby laid the possible foundation for two great churches, . . . sharply divided and opposing each other. . . .

In all this Paul had made no concession in any way. His apostleship and gospel had been recognized and it had been admitted that the law in general, and circumcision in particular, were not to be demanded of the Gentile Christians.

. . . Nevertheless, . . . the Gentile Christians were asked to abstain from certain things which were most offensive to the Jews. The request was based on the principle of brotherly love. — *Thatcher* : Apostolic Church, pp. 147, 149.

§ 322. **The Letter to the Gentiles.** The resolutions adopted on this occasion were now communicated to the Gentile churches in Syria and Cilicia, in an epistle drawn up in the name of the assembly; and two persons of good repute in the church, perhaps members of the Presbytery at Jerusalem, Barsabas and Silas (Sylvanus), were chosen as bearers of it, and were to accompany Paul and Barnabas, and counterwork the intrigues of their Judaizing opponents. — *Neander* : Planting and Training, p. 130.

§ 323. **The News Received with Joy at Antioch.** It is natural, in the absence of anything to the contrary, to infer that they returned, as they had come, through Samaria and Phœnicia, and gladdened the hearts of the disciples there by telling them of the triumph which had been won at Jerusalem for the cause of freedom. . . . We can picture to ourselves the eager excitement of that moment, the listening crowds [in the Antioch church], the letter, which as a formal missive would be sealed and tied round with thread, solemnly opened and read aloud, mortification and murmurs on the one side, and clamorous applause on the other, as each sentence repudiated the claims of the Judaizers and confirmed the principles and the work of St. Paul and Barnabas. To the Gentile converts it was, indeed — won, as it had been, after a hard battle — as the Great Charter of their freedom. — *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 249*b*.

PAUL'S REBUKE OF PETER AT ANTIOCH.

§ 324. **The Dispute between Peter and Paul.** Peter . . . at first held free intercourse with the Gentile believers, at Antioch, as he had done once before with Cornelius at Cæsarea. But when certain Jewish Christians arrived with some commission from James he withdrew from this intercourse through fear of the party of the Circumcision. The rest of the Jews, including even Barnabas, followed his example. Paul saw that this action would practically force the Gentiles to submit to circumcision if they wished to secure a position of real equality with the Jewish believers. It was thus contrary to Peter's expressed conviction as well as to the spirit of the letter from Jerusalem. He therefore openly rebuked Peter for what he termed his hypocrisy, and succeeded in vindicating the cause of Christian liberty. — *Robinson* : In Cambridge Companion, p. 135.

§ 325. **St. Paul on Circumcision.** St. Paul vigorously opposed all those who taught the *necessity* of Jewish rites so far as salvation is concerned. This is evident from this chapter and from the Epistle to the Galatians. But, on the other hand, St. Paul had not the slightest objection to men observing the law and submitting to circumcision, if they only realised that these things were mere national customs and observed them as national customs, and even as religious rites, but not as *necessary* religious rites. . . . It was not to circumcision St. Paul objected, but to the extreme stress laid upon it, the intolerant views connected with it. Circumcision as a voluntary practice, an interesting historical relic of ancient ideas and customs, he never rejected, — nay, further, he even practised it, as we shall see in the case of Timothy; circumcision as a compulsory practice binding upon all men St. Paul utterly abhorred. . . .

He refused to circumcise Titus, for instance, because the Judaizing party were insisting upon the absolute necessity of circumcising the Gentiles if they were to be saved. Had St. Paul consented to the circumcision of Titus, he would have been yielding assent, or seeming to yield assent, to their contention. He

circumcised Timothy at Lystra because of the Jews in that neighbourhood; . . . because they knew that his mother was a Jewess, and the principle of the Jewish law, and the Roman law too, was that a man's nationality and status followed that of his mother, not that of his father, so that the son of a Jewess must be incorporated with Israel. — *Stokes : Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 225–227.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 326. **God's Blessing a Test of the Value of a Work.** The work among the Gentiles had received the same seal of Divine favor as that among the Jews, — the manifest presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The smile of heaven is the best evidence of the actual value of any work, and yet much good work must of necessity be done in faith only. Blessed are they that have not seen their reward here and yet have remained faithful.

§ 327. **The Insufficiency of the Law and the Sufficiency of Grace.** From the time when the law was first given men had sought to keep it, and had failed. Its object was to reveal to man his sin; the mission of grace was to meet the sinner's need and through Christ furnish peace and pardon.

§ 328. **Great Faults Not an Inseparable Bar to Great Service.** Peter represents a type of men who are nothing if not extremists. At one moment he was ready to die for his Lord; at the next he forsook him, and at the word of a servant, denied him. At Jerusalem he was foremost in advocating the abrogation of the law, and yet at Antioch he dissimulated before "those of the circumcision," and timidly withdrew from communion with the unpopular Gentiles. Peter did a great work for Christ and the church. But how much more he might have accomplished if he had always stood firmly by his convictions.

§ 329. **James a Peacemaker, Not a Compromiser.** Men of the type of James seem to have been created to stand between opposing factions and effect a reconciliation (see *Taylor : St. Paul*, pp. 158, 159). He was convinced of the truth, bold enough to state his convictions, and wise enough not to antagonize but to persuade others. He did not make peace through compromise, but through strong as well as "sweet" reasonableness. The true preacher is a man of convictions as well as of tact and patience.

§ 330. **The Council at Jerusalem Guided by the Spirit of God.** The decision promulgated by this council was a great stride in advance of the position heretofore taken by the Jewish wing of the Christian church. It was a step in the dark. This grasp of the situation and willingness to accept the new truth toward which the Holy Spirit was leading them required of the leaders of the church a wonderful courage of conviction, and a strong trust in God. The leading which the Spirit gave these men in the face of such obstacles he is equally able and willing to do for those who seek his guidance now.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. DIFFERENCES IN THE TWO ACCOUNTS OF PAUL'S VISIT TO THE COUNCIL AT JERUSALEM, AS GIVEN IN Acts, ch. 15, and Gal., ch. 2: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 194 ff; Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 188; *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 247–249; Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 233, 234. 2. PAUL'S FIVE VISITS TO JERUSALEM: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 301, note. 3. THE SPEECH OF JAMES: Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 190–194. 4. THE HAND OF FELLOWSHIP; ITS MEANING: *Lechler*, Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. i, pp. 217, 218. 5. THEORY OF PETER'S LOSS OF LEADERSHIP AT JERUSALEM: *Thatcher*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 153, 154.

Lesson 18.—CARRYING THE GOSPEL INTO MACEDONIA. The Beginning of the Second Missionary Journey.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 331. **Design of the Lesson.** To give an account of the work of Paul and Silas during the early part of the second missionary journey, and of the special divine guidance by which the gospel was carried from Asia Minor into Europe.

§ 332. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note the length of time that elapsed between the close of the first and the beginning of the second missionary journey, as well as the circumstances that led to the choice of Silas as Paul's traveling companion.

(2) Call attention to the fact that in following the great overland route of travel and commerce between the East and the West, through Issos and Tarsus, Paul would straightway reach the Gentile churches in Galatia, planted on the first journey, and deliver to them the decree of the council at Jerusalem whereby they were released, by the highest authorities in the church, from bondage to the Jewish law.

(3) Observe that Paul's evident purpose was to push on toward Ephesus, in the province of Asia, but that the Spirit of God had a different plan which was not revealed until the apostle reached Troas, when a vision in the night showed him that the beginning of the evangelization of Europe was the next step in the divine purpose concerning his work.

(4) Incidentally call attention to the occurrence at this point of the first of the so-called "we" passages in Acts, and to their bearing upon the authorship of the book and upon the question of Paul's relation from this time on to the writer of these passages.

(5) Show how Paul's work in Philippi, though attended by severe sufferings, was the means of establishing a vigorous church between which and Paul the friendliest relations ever afterwards existed. Glance at his epistle to the Philippians written many years later during his imprisonment in Rome, and note the expressions of his tender love for them, and his gratitude for their repeated help and sympathy in his work.

(6) Mark, finally, how the indignities and persecution suffered by Paul and Silas at the hands of the magistrates in Philippi resulted in the humiliation of the latter and in the furtherance of the gospel in this place.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE SEPARATION OF PAUL AND BARNABAS.

§ 333. **The Reason for the Separation.** When Paul, some time after his return from the apostolic council, proposed to Barnabas a new missionary tour, the latter wished to take along his kinsman, Mark. But Paul objected, because

this Mark, in the previous journey, had not proved steadfast. This led to an irritation of feeling, "a sharp contention." . . . Paul, with his stern regard for duty, excluded all personal considerations, and felt compelled to censure severely any want of self-denial for the sake of the Lord. Barnabas, who seems to have been naturally of a milder turn, was disposed to be lenient towards his kinsman. . . . We afterwards find Mark . . . reconciled with Paul, as the latter himself testifies. Equally transient, of course, was Paul's dispute also with Barnabas. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, pp. 259, 260.

On Mark's possible reason for leaving the apostles at Perga, see § 282, Lesson 15.

PAUL REVISITING THE CHURCHES IN GALATIA.

§ 334. The Beginning of St. Paul's Second Missionary Journey. Accompanied by Silas, he passed through Cilicia, crossed Taurus no doubt by the Cilician Gates, and came first to Derbe, and then to Lystra, where he found a disciple named Timothy. . . . It appears that Paul, after leaving Lystra with Silas and Timothy, spent some time in the country, for it is clearly implied in verses 4 and 5, that they taught and preached in "the cities" on their route. We may conclude that they visited those cities of the district where Paul had so many friends and converts, Iconium and Antioch; and it was in all probability while they were in Antioch that they were "forbidden of the Holy Ghost to speak the word in Asia." The prohibition implies a previous intention on their part, by which Paul's action hitherto had been guided. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 74, 75.

§ 335. Paul Circumcises Timothy. (1) Paul for the sake of the Jews circumcised Timothy, whose father was a Greek. . . . In the narrative about Titus, it is compulsory circumcision of which mention is made, which Paul could not submit to without coming into direct collision with his principles, while Timothy willingly submitted to the rite. Where this voluntary reception of the ceremony took place, nothing could hinder him from permitting it; yea, his great principle of becoming a Jew to the Jews, would rather lead him to desire [it] . . . in order that they might give no offence to the weak Jews. — *Olshausen*: Commentary, Acts, vol. iv, p. 537.

(2) Paul circumcised Timothy, not, as Ewald supposes, to remove the reproach of illegitimacy, but to remove the offence of the Jews against the gospel. The Jews here mentioned are the unbelieving Jews. They would regard Timothy, not merely as an uncircumcised Gentile, but as an apostate from Judaism; and hence it would excite great offence if he, being uncircumcised, assisted Paul in preaching the gospel: it would perhaps have completely closed the door of access to them. . . . The cases [of Timothy and Titus] are not similar; there are at least three points of difference: 1. Titus was a pure Gentile; whereas Timothy was a Jew by his mother's side. 2. It was the Jewish Christians who demanded the circumcision of Titus; whereas it was for the sake of the unbelieving Jews that Paul circumcised Timothy. 3. A principle of doctrine was involved in the case of Titus, — namely, that circumcision was essential to salvation; whereas in the case of Timothy there was no question of doctrine, but merely a question of prudence. Paul here acted according to his principles of becoming in matters of indifference all things to all men, in order to promote the gospel of Christ; . . . but certainly not in compliance with the doctrine of the Judaizers, that circumcision was necessary to salvation. It is easy to see how the want of circumcision in Timothy would have hindered the entrance of the gospel among the Jews, whilst his circumcision would promote that object. — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 103, 104.

§ 336. **Paul Delivers the Decree of the Council.** Wherever he went he delivered the apostolic decree in order that he might counteract the workings of the Judaisers. This decree served a twofold purpose. It relieved the minds of the Gentile brethren with respect to the law and its observances, and it also showed to them that the Jerusalem Church and apostles recognised the Divine authority and apostolate of St. Paul himself, which these "false brethren" from Jerusalem had already assailed, as they did four or five years later both in Galatia and at Corinth. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 259, 260.

FROM GALATIA TO PHILIPPI.

§ 337. **Led by the Spirit.** (1) When their first plan was thus altered [by being forbidden of the Spirit to preach in the province of Asia], they turned northwards, with the intention of entering Bithynia, presuming that they would be allowed to preach there. But when they came opposite Mysia, and tried to continue their northward route into Bithynia, "the Spirit of Jesus suffered them not." They were compelled to turn westwards; and keeping along the southern frontier of Mysia, they reached Troas, whence they sailed to Macedonia. The language of this passage clearly implies that they were forbidden to preach, but not to travel in Asia; whereas they were forbidden even to set foot in Bithynia. — *Ramsay*: Church in Roman Empire, pp. 75, 76.

(2) We are told that "the Spirit of Jesus" would not permit him [Paul] to preach in Bithynia, though Bithynia became afterwards rich in Christian Churches, and was one of the districts to which St. Peter some years later addressed his first Epistle. The Jews were numerous in the districts of Bithynia and Asia, and "the Spirit of Jesus" or "the Holy Ghost" . . . had determined to utilise St. Paul in working directly among the Gentiles, reserving the preaching of the gospel to the Dispersion, as the scattered Jews were called, to St. Peter and his friends. . . . Divine providence had cut out his great work in Europe, and was impelling him westward even when he desired to tarry in Asia. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 266, 267.

§ 338. **The Call to Macedonia.** It was not improbably the anxious wish of Paul at this time, A.D. 51, to transfer his labours to Rome. The Apostle of the Gentiles would naturally desire to visit the metropolis of the Gentile world and about six years after this he wrote to the Romans, "Ofentimes I purposed to come unto you, but was let hitherto." . . . A voyage to Rome at this time would have been of little avail, for an edict was shortly afterwards issued by the Emperor Claudius that all Jews should depart from the Imperial city, and Paul, as a Jew, would have been within the terms of the proclamation. . . .

While he was ruminating whither to direct his steps, a divine interposition resolved the doubt, and pointed to Macedonia. "A vision appeared to Paul in the night. There stood a man of Macedonia, and prayed him, saying, 'Come over into Macedonia, and help us.'" The sacred narrative proceeds, "And after he had seen the vision, immediately *we* endeavored to go into Macedonia, assuredly gathering that the Lord had called *us* to preach the Gospel unto them." — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. i, p. 197.

§ 339. **The "We" Passages in the Acts.** The first person plural "we" is used in certain parts of the narrative, where the writer is describing the journeys of St. Paul. He therefore professes to be a companion of St. Paul. This first person appears in the ordinary text for the first time at Troas, during the second missionary journey, and continues to Philippi, where it is dropped as suddenly as it had appeared. It is taken up again after several years during the third missionary journey at this same place Philippi, and continues till St. Paul arrives at Jeru-

salem and confers with James and the elders. When again he sets sail for Italy, it accompanies him and remains in his company during the voyage and shipwreck and until his arrival in Rome. . . .

Who then is this writer who uses the first person? The obvious answer is that which identifies him with the traditional author of the work, St. Luke. This person was certainly a trusty companion of the apostle. . . . Moreover, Luke is described as "the beloved physician," and a tendency to the use of medical terms has been observed both in the Third Gospel and the Acts. — *Lightfoot*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Acts of the Apostles," p. 31.

§ 340. **The Voyage from Troas to Philippi.** Virgil has described an evening and a sunrise on this coast, before and after an eventful night. That night was indeed eventful in which St. Paul received his commission to proceed to Macedonia. The commission was promptly executed. . . . The men of Troas awoke to their trade and their labour. Among those who were busy about the shipping in the harbour were the newly arrived Christian travellers, seeking for a passage to Europe, — Paul, and Silas, and Timotheus, — and that new companion, "Luke, the beloved Physician," who [had] . . . now joined the mission, of which he afterwards wrote the history. . . .

It is evident that Paul and his companions sailed from Troas with a fair wind. On a later occasion we are told that five days were spent on the passage from Philippi to Troas. On the present occasion the same voyage, in the opposite direction, was made in two . . . [the night being spent under the shelter of the high shore of the island of Samothrace. Doubtless] the small Turkish village of Cavallo is the Naples of Macedonia, the "Neapolis" at which St. Paul landed, and the sea-port of Philippi, . . . a city of no little importance as a Roman military "colony." — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 284, 285, 287, 288.

PAUL'S WORK IN PHILIPPI.

§ 341. **A Place of Prayer by the Riverside.** Better, *where an oratory was established*. The word, which was the Greek equivalent for the Hebrew "house of prayer," is used in this sense by Josephus, and was current among the Jews at Rome. Where they had no synagogue, and in a military station like Philippi there was not likely to be one, the Jews frequented the river-banks, which made ablutions easy, and often succeeded in getting a piece of ground assigned for that purpose outside the walls of the city. Juvenal notes this as one of the instances of the decay of the old faith of Rome:

"The groves and streams which once
were sacred ground
Are now let out to Jews." . . .

The oratories, or *proseuchae*, thus formed, were commonly circular, and without a roof. The practice continued in the time of Tertullian, who speaks of the "orationes litorales" of the Jews. . . . Finding no synagogue in the city [Philippi], and hearing of the oratory, the company of preachers went out to it to take their part in the Sabbath services, and to preach Christ to any Jews they might find there. *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 258b, 259.

§ 342. **The Demoniac Slave Girl Healed.** It would appear . . . that she was the property of several masters. She was a valuable possession to them, because her soothsaying, which was supposed to emanate from Apollo, was a source of great gain. . . . It is unnecessary to suppose that she merely uttered what she had heard spoken by others; but the case is similar to the testimonies of

evil spirits in favour of Christ recorded in the Gospels, however such testimonies are to be explained. . . . [The statement Paul] *being grieved* . . . involves the idea both of grief and indignation: grief for the unfortunate condition of the slave; indignation at the evil spirit by whom she was possessed. [He] *said to the spirit* . . . *In the name of Jesus Christ, come out of her.* Christ performed miracles in His own name; the apostles did so in the name of Christ. The one was the Son; the others were the servants of the household. "In my name shall they cast out devils."—*Glag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 120, 121.

§ 343. **Roman Law Regarding Gentile Religions.** [The magistrates] were careful to frame their charges in such a way as to make it appear that Paul and Silas were offending against the laws of the state. In the first place, it was said that they were Jews. Of course this in itself was not a criminal offense; it was only an appeal to the popular dislike of the Jews. Being Jews, it was to be expected that they had done something offensive and worthy of punishment. The real charge was that they were trying to introduce a foreign religion, one that was regarded as unlawful. . . . Eastern religions were forbidden in the West, and Paul and Silas were charged with having acted contrary to this law.—*Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 169.

§ 344. **The First Instance of Gentile Persecution: Paul and Silas Beaten and Imprisoned.** The slave-masters were touched in their pockets, and it filled them with fury. . . . They suddenly arrested Paul and Silas, and dragged them before the sitting magistrates. . . . As the proceedings were doubtless in Latin, with which Paul and Silas had little or no acquaintance, . . . they had no time to plead their citizenship until they were actually in the hands of the lictors, or, if they had, their voices were drowned in the cries of the colonists. . . . The Apostles were seized; their garments were rudely torn off their backs; they were hurried off and tied by their hands to the *palus*, or whipping-post in the forum; and . . . endured, at the hands of these low lictors, those outrages, blows, strokes, weals, the pangs and butchery, the extreme disgrace and infamy, the unjust infliction of which even a hard-headed and hard-hearted Gentile could not describe without something of pathos and indignation.

It was the first of three such scourgings with the rods of Roman lictors which Paul endured, and it is needless to dwell even for one moment on its dangerous and lacerating anguish. . . . The Duumvirs, with the same monstrous violation of law, flung Paul and Silas into prison, and gave the jailer special orders to keep them safely. . . . The jailer not only thrust them into the dank, dark, loathsome recesses of the inner prison, but also secured their feet in "the wood" . . . resembling our "stocks."—*Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 279, 281, 282.

§ 345. **The Jailer Converted and Baptized.** No ill-treatment could . . . destroy that secret source of joy and peace which St. Paul possessed, . . . and therefore at midnight the astonished prisoners heard the inner dungeon ringing with unwonted songs of praise raised by the Jewish strangers. An earthquake, too, lent its terrors to the strange scene, shaking the prison to its foundations and loosing the staples to which the prisoners' chains were fastened. The jailor, roused from sleep, and seeing the prison doors opened wide, would have committed suicide were it not for Paul's restraining and authoritative voice; and then the astonished official, who must have heard the strange rumours . . . —"These men are the servants of the Most High God, which proclaim unto you the way of salvation"—rushed into the presence of the Apostles crying out in words which have ever since been famous, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" to which the equally famous answer was given, "Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be

saved, thou and thy house." The jailor then took the Apostles, bathed their bruised bodies, set food before them, gathered his household to listen to the glad tidings, which they received . . . [and] were at once baptized. — *Stokes : Acts*, vol. ii, pp. 285, 286.

§ 346: **The Message of the Magistrates.** A change, also, . . . had come over the minds of the magistrates themselves. . . . The message conveyed by the lictors was expressed in a somewhat contemptuous form, "*Let those men go.*" The jailor . . . felt his infinite debt of gratitude to the Apostles, not only for his preservation from a violent death, but for the tidings they had given him of eternal life. . . . When, therefore, the lictors brought the order, he went with them to announce the intelligence to the prisoners, and joyfully told them to leave their dungeon and "go in peace." — *Conybeare and Howson : St. Paul*, vol. i, pp. 309, 310.

§ 347. **Paul Demands Public Reparation.** As the punishment was public, so must the reparation be public. It has been often asked, Why Paul did not make this appeal to his privilege as a Roman citizen before, when the prætors ordered him to be scourged? . . . The common opinion is, either that he was not heard in the tumult, or that he knew that he would not be heard. . . . Paul seems here voluntarily to have waived his rights, for some reasons with which we are unacquainted: he perhaps felt that the cause of the gospel would be more benefited by his endurance than by his avoidance of suffering: and this we find was actually the case. [In the command] *Nay verily; but let them come and fetch us out* . . . he had respect not merely to his honour, but to the honour and interest of Christianity in Philippi. . . . Had [they] departed without a public declaration of their innocence, a stain would have rested upon their reputation, and thus the cause of the gospel would have been injured. Besides, such a public declaration of the illegality of their punishment on the part of the magistrates would undoubtedly encourage the new converts, and at the same time shield them from popular violence. — *Gloag : Commentary, Acts*, pp. 129, 130.

§ 348. **Paul's Departure from Philippi.** They [Paul and Silas] now betook themselves to the house of Lydia, where the other Christians of the city were assembled, and spoke the last words of encouragement and exhortation. Then they quitted the place, but Luke and Timothy, who had not been included in the persecution, stayed behind in peace. It is easily explained how Timothy on account of his youth, since he took but little part in the proclamation of the gospel, escaped the persecutions from which Paul and Silas suffered, and could therefore remain without danger at Philippi. Paul left in Philippi a church full of faith and zeal, who shortly after gave a proof of their affectionate concern for him by sending contributions for his maintenance, though he never sought for such gifts, but supported himself by the labor of his own hands. — *Neander : Planting and Training*, pp. 177, 178.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 349. **Led by the Spirit.** At each turning-point of his journey, Paul heard the guiding voice saying "this is the way, walk ye in it." God's leading voice is not confined to any age or person, being limited only by our unwillingness to accept the guidance of the Spirit in our lives.

§ 350. **Personal Responsibility for Missionary Work.** The call of the man of Macedonia "Come over and help us," is the call of missions to-day from "those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." The voice is personal

and addressed to each one who has named the name of Christ. All cannot respond in person, but those who answer to the call are our substitutes, and should have our hearty support and earnest prayers.

§ 351. **The Great Question, and its Answer.** The question of the Philippian jailer, and the answer of Paul! This question and answer must become in substance a personal experience in order to salvation.

§ 352. **Different Types of Conversion.** God's ways of converting men are as various as their capacities, characteristics and circumstances. In the case of Lydia, it is merely said that the Lord opened her heart to receive the things spoken by Paul; on the other hand in the case of the jailer, and of Paul himself, conversion meant a sudden and overwhelming change. The precise form of this personal element is therefore entirely immaterial. The constant and essential element in every genuine conversion is an actual turning from sin to righteousness, from self to God.

§ 353. **Songs in the Night.** Paul and Silas were bound with iron chains, but no chains could bind their spirits, or take from them the peace that passeth all understanding. The lacerated flesh, the painful stocks, and the foul den in which they were cast, — all these were forgotten in the ecstasy of spiritual joy that enabled them to glory in suffering for Christ's sake.

§ 354. **Resisting Evil.** The apostle, in his attitude toward the Philippian magistrates gives us a practical interpretation of our Lord's sermon on the Mount concerning the non-resistance of evil. But to tolerate outrage and injustice without seeking the redress to which every law-abiding citizen is entitled, is to encourage evil doers in their ways.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PROBABLE CHRONOLOGY OF THE SECOND MISSIONARY JOURNEY: *Ramsay*, The Church in the Roman Empire, pp. 84, 85. 2. TIMOTHY, THE EVANGELIST: Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Timothy," p. 3252 ff. 3. ANCIENT TROY: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 280, 281. 4. ALEXANDRIAN TROAS: *Glag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 109. 5. PHILIPPI, A ROMAN COLONY: *Handy* Commentary, Acts, p. 258; *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, pp. 274, 275. 6. A ROMAN PRISON: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 321. 7. PRIVILEGES OF ROMAN CITIZENSHIP: *Olshausen*, Commentary, Acts, p. 547; Ency. Brit., vol. xx, Art., "Roman Law," p. 704a. 8. PAUL'S POLICY IN CONFINING HIS WORK TO CENTERS OF POPULATION: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, p. 185.

Lesson 19.—PREACHING IN THESSALONICA, BEROEA AND ATHENS. Paul's Work Continued in Macedonia, and Begun in Achaia.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 355. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Paul, driven from Philippi experienced much success in Thessalonica and Beroea, and comparative failure in Athens; also to show from his subsequent references to his work in Thessalonica those characteristic features of his ministry there which bound his converts to him with strong love and loyalty.

§ 356. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson, follow Paul's route on the map, gather all available information about the places in which he labored, and decide, if possible, why in going from Philippi he took the course he did, rather than some other.

(2) Note the manifestations of Paul's work in Thessalonica, preaching, as usual, first to the Jews, then to the Gentiles; the opposition of the former, and the joyful reception of the gospel by the latter; note also how, as usual, the very persecutions by which the hostile Jews tried to silence Paul proved the means of sending the gospel elsewhere.

(3) In studying the apostle's reminiscences of his ministry in Thessalonica mark the features which seemed especially prominent, and discover, if possible, the reasons why this ministry was so powerful in winning men not only to the truth but to the apostle himself.

(4) Call attention to the candid and fair consideration received by Paul and his message at the hands of the Berean Jews, presenting as it does such a pleasing contrast to the attitude of the Jews in other places.

(5) Point out the peculiar points in Paul's ministry in Athens, and the possible, or probable, reasons for his small success in this metropolis of the world's art and philosophy.

(6) Picture, finally, his deep anxiety concerning the condition of the converts in Thessalonica, from whom he had been so suddenly driven away, and the grounds for this anxiety in their situation as sheep without a shepherd, surrounded by wolves, and tempted on every side to wander away from the fold.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

A CHURCH ESTABLISHED IN THESSALONICA.

§ 357. **From Philippi to Thessalonica.** Having been "shamefully entreated" and then honorably dismissed from Philippi, Paul and two of his companions, leaving Luke at Philippi, passing through other cities, came to Thessalonica. This celebrated city, distant about one hundred miles south-west from Philippi, was beautifully situated on the slope of a hill, at the northern end of the Thermaic Gulf. It was a great commercial city, the capital of the province and residence of the proconsul. After the battle of Philippi, on account of its attachment to the cause of Anthony, it was made a free city. Strabo mentions it as the largest city in Macedonia. . . . At present it is considered the second city of European Turkey, and has a population of 70,000 [one half of whom are Jews, having no less than thirty-six synagogues].—*Ormiston*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 340.

§ 358. **Preaching in Thessalonica.** Here they [Paul and Silas] found a synagogue, which for three weeks Paul visited on the Sabbath; the hearts of many proselytes were won by his addresses; and through them a way was opened for publishing the gospel among the heathen in the city. . . . It is certain that the Gentiles, whose attention was awakened by the proselytes, soon assembled in

various places to hear him, and from them chiefly a church was formed.—*Neander*: Planting and Training, p. 178.

§ 359. **Persecution by the Jews; Paul Escapes to Berea.** [At] Thessalonica he again experienced the undying hostility of his Jewish fellow-countrymen . . . [who were] roused to opposition, possibly because of St. Paul's success among the Gentiles, who received his doctrines with such avidity that there believed "of the devout Greeks a great multitude, and of the chief women not a few." . . . The Jews therefore, assisted by the pagans, assaulted the residence of Jason, with whom St. Paul and his friends were staying. They missed the Apostles themselves, but they seized Jason and some of the apostolic band, or at least some of their converts whom they found in Jason's house, and brought them before the town magistrates. . . . The Apostles, however, escaped arrest, and the local brethren determined that they should incur no danger; so while the accused remained to stand their trial, Paul and Silas and Timotheus were despatched to Berea, where they were for a time welcomed, and free discussion permitted in the synagogue concerning the truths taught by the Evangelists.—*Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 295, 296.

§ 360. **Jason and his Associates Accused of Treason.** The Julian Laws. The crime of which Jason and his associates were now accused . . . was treason! The law of the Twelve Tables (the Magna Charta of Rome) had simply enacted, that "whoever excited an enemy against the state, or betrayed a citizen to an enemy, was to be punished with death." . . . The provisions of the Twelve Tables had been extended by what were called the Julian Laws, and by them treason was made to comprise various offences. "Whoever violated the majesty of the state" was declared a traitor; and upon the construction of this general and vague clause it was impossible to say within what bounds the Imperial jealousy was to be confined. . . . If one desired to overwhelm an enemy, and could find no plausible pretence for a prosecution, it was a common resource to call in aid the law of treason. . . . The punishment probably varied according to the heinousness of the offence. In some cases, the penalty was death; in others, . . . exile. The mildest sentence was confiscation of property.

It was to the Julian Laws that the mob of Thessalonica now had recourse against Jason and his companions. They dragged them before the politarchs, saying, . . . "these all do contrary to the decrees of Cæsar, saying, that '*There is another king, one Jesus.*'" The Roman Proconsul was resident at Thessalonica, and the authorities would be alarmed at the idea of being thought disloyal. . . . The politarchs dared not dismiss the complaint; they contented themselves with taking bail from Jason and the rest. . . . We may also conjecture that the persecution thus begun against the Christians of Thessalonica was of some continuance, for allusion is made to it in both the Epistles which Paul afterwards wrote to them.—*Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 232-234.

PAUL'S DESCRIPTION OF HIS WORK IN THESSALONICA.

§ 361. **Privations of Paul in Thessalonica.** The Apostle, indeed, while at Thessalonica was at one and the same time the Christian advocate and the industrious artisan. He had no private fortune. He had either already expended it upon the Gospel, or perhaps it had been confiscated by the Jews. . . . It is likely that, notwithstanding his toil night and day, the Apostle at this time underwent very unusual privations. There had recently been throughout Greece so severe a famine, that a modus or peck of wheat was sold for . . . six times the usual price. It is also probable that the Apostle still continued to labour

under no little bodily infirmity . . . ; so that he was less able to earn the wonted wages by personal exertion in the art of tentmaking. Fortunately, under such a concurrence of difficulties, assistance was rendered him from an unexpected quarter. . . . While Paul was at Thessalonica he twice received relief from the Philippians. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 229, 230.

§ 362. **Paul's Love for his Thessalonian Converts.** [In 1 Thes. 2: 1-12, Paul appeals to the church] as to unimpeachable witnesses of the earnestness of his visit to them, and of the boldness with which he had faced the dangers of Thessalonica, and after such recent and painful experience of the outrages of Philippi. . . . These appeals to their knowledge of the life and character and behaviour of Paul and his two fellow-missionaries would have been needless if they had never been impugned. . . . Such calumnies were too preposterous to be harmful; such innuendoes too malevolent to be believed. In order to disprove them he had but to appeal at once to notorious facts. . . . His Thessalonian friends *knew*, and God was witness, there had been no deceit, no uncleanness, no base motives, no secret avarice, no desire to win favour, no fawning flattery in the exhortations of the missionaries. They had come, not for selfishness, but for sacrifice; not for glory, but to pour out their hearts' tenderness, and spend their very lives for the sake of their converts, cherishing them as tenderly as a nursing mother fosters her children in her warm bosom, yet waiving their own rights, and taking nothing whatever from them, nor laying the smallest burden upon them. . . .

He goes on to tell them that regarding them as his glory and joy and crown of boasting at the coming of Christ—feeling, in his absence from them, like a father bereaved of his children—he had twice purposed to come to them, and had twice been hindered by Satan. . . . When Timothy rejoined him at Corinth, the news which he had brought back was so reassuring . . . that it had cheered the Apostle in the midst of his own heavy afflictions, and had been to him like a fresh spring of life. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, pp. 330, 331, 333.

PAUL AND SILAS IN BEREÆA.

§ 363. **The Bereæans Receive the Word.** [At Bereæ Paul] went, according to his custom, immediately to the synagogue. The Jews here were of a "nobler" spirit than those of Thessalonica. Their minds were less narrowed by prejudice, and they were more willing to receive "the truth in the love of it." . . . In a spirit very different from the ignoble violence of the Thessalonian Jews, the Bereæans not only listened to the Apostle's arguments, but they examined the Scriptures themselves, to see if those arguments were justified by prophecy. And, feeling the importance of the subject presented to them, they made this scrutiny of their holy books their "daily" occupation. . . . The Apostle's visit resulted in the conversion of "many." Nor was the blessing confined to the Hebrew community. The same Lord who is "rich unto all that call upon Him," called many "not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles." Both men and women, and those of the highest respectability, among the Greeks, were added to the church founded by St. Paul in that provincial city of Macedonia, which was his temporary shelter from the storm of persecution. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, p. 340.

§ 364. **Hostility of the Thessalonian Jews; the Flight to Athens.** The length of St. Paul's stay in the city is quite uncertain, . . . [but] we conclude that he remained there several days at least. . . . The cause which led him to leave Bereæa was the hostility of the Jews of Thessalonica, and when we

remember that the two cities were only separated by a distance of sixty miles, — that the events which happened in the synagogue of one city would soon be made known in the synagogue of the other, — and that Jewish bigotry was never long in taking active measures to crush its opponents, — we are led to the conclusion that the Apostle was forced to retreat from Berea after no long interval of time. The Jews came like hunters upon their prey, as they had done before from Iconium to Lystra. They could not arrest the progress of the Gospel, but they “stirred up the people” there, as at Thessalonica before. They made his friends feel that his continuance in the city was no longer safe. He was withdrawn from Berea and sent to Athens, as in the beginning of his ministry he had been withdrawn from Jerusalem and sent to Tarsus. . . . Silas and Timotheus remained behind, to build up [the church] in its holy faith, to be a comfort and support in its trials and persecutions, and to give it such organisation as might be necessary. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 340, 341.

PAUL IN ATHENS.

§ 365. **Paul in Ancient Athens.** Paul waited in Athens for the coming of Silas and Timothy. Whether they actually came, or not, we cannot tell. It is probable that Timothy came alone, but Paul was so exercised in mind about the Thessalonians that he at once sent him back to Macedonia to visit and strengthen them. But although alone in Athens, he was by no means idle. He was in the very citadel of heathenism, of idolatry. Athens was the seat of the greatest university in the world, and its professors were of course all heathen. It exerted the greatest influence on the thought and culture of the world. . . . At this time it was the home of philosophy and philosophers. They wandered about through the streets, market-places, and cool colonnades, surrounded by their pupils, discussing the highest and most important questions as well as the most trivial.

But Athens was also the home of the gods, for no other city had so many temples as she. . . . She was rich in works of art of all kinds, but especially in statues. . . . Athens was now falling into decay. . . . The genius of Paul is again made apparent by his conduct here. He easily adapted himself to the situation, and adopted the methods of the philosophers, and went about through the streets entering into conversation whenever opportunity presented itself. He met some of the philosophers themselves, and to the gaping crowds that gathered about him he told the story of the cross and of the resurrection. — *Thatcher* : Apostolic Church, pp. 180-182.

§ 366. **Paul and the Trifling Philosophers.** (1) The Epicureans and Stoics (the Sadducees and Pharisees of the Greeks), who, loitering about Athens in learned leisure, now proffered battle to the Apostle. Paul was little disposed to indulge their passion for literary trifling, or to involve himself in the subtleties with which human reason had entangled itself. He disclaimed all the weapons of sophistry, and preached matters of fact plain and simple in themselves, however repugnant to the preconceived notions of philosophy, viz., that Jesus of Nazareth had come into the world to save sinners, and had risen from the dead, the first-fruits of them that sleep. The Epicureans turned contemptuously to the bystanders and said, “What can this babbler mean?” while the Stoics assumed a more serious air, and charged him with an innovation of the state religion. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. i. p. 260.

(2) Yet many among those who gathered around the apostle during his conversations, were at least pleased to hear something new; and their curiosity was

excited to hear of the strange divinity whom he wished to introduce, and to be informed respecting his new doctrine. They took him to the hill, where the first tribunal at Athens, the Areopagus, was accustomed to hold its sittings, and where he could easily find a spot suited to a large audience. The discourse of Paul on this occasion is a living demonstration of his apostolic wisdom and eloquence: we here perceive how the apostle (to use his own language) to the heathens became a heathen, that he might gain the heathens to Christianity. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, p. 184.

§ 367. **Paul's Defense of Christianity before the Athenians.** The address as recorded by the historian contains the summary only of the Apostle's argument; but even in this compendium we cannot but admire the singular adroitness with which Paul adapted to his purpose existing circumstances, and the still more extraordinary boldness with which he enunciated his doctrines. He had been charged with introducing new divinities, and true, he had inculcated the one Supreme Being; but how admirably does he avail himself of the inscription on the altar! Who could accuse him of innovation when he only expounded to the Athenians the attributes of the God whom they had ignorantly worshipped? . . .

Again, what felicity, and at the same time what moral courage, is there in the reference of the Apostle to the scene by which he was surrounded! . . . Immediately before him was the Acropolis, with the glorious Parthenon, and the colossal statue of Minerva, and a thousand other images, many of them glittering with gold and silver. How impressively, but with what peril, must he have uttered the words, "God that made the world, and all things there, seeing that he is Lord of Heaven and Earth, dwelleth not in *temples made with hands*! Forasmuch as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is *like unto gold or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device*." How happy, too, amongst a literary people, was Paul's citation of the poets. . . .

The closing of the Apostle's discourse was directed against the mistaken notions of the Athenians as to Jesus and the Resurrection. The latter was no goddess, as they supposed; but the Apostle meant to teach that *all* should rise at the last day, and should be judged by that man whom God had appointed. Simple throughout as is the language of the preacher, yet observe how, in the compass of a few words, he tells them the noblest truths. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 263-266.

§ 368. **The Effect of Paul's Speech on the Athenians.** On that hill of Ares, before that throng, Paul spoke no more. He went from the midst of them, sorry, it may be, for their jeers, seeing through their spiritual incapacity, but conscious that in that city his public work, at least, was over. He could brave opposition; he was discouraged by indifference. One dignified adherent, indeed, he found — but one only — in Dionysius the Areopagite; and one more in a woman — possibly a Jewess — whose name is uncertain: but at Athens he founded no church, to Athens he wrote no epistle, and in Athens, often as he passed its neighbourhood, he never set foot again. . . . St. Paul was despised and ridiculed, and he does not for a moment attempt to represent it otherwise; St. Paul's speech . . . was [notwithstanding its eloquence] an all but total failure, and St. Luke does not conceal its ineffectiveness. . . .

He left Athens as he had lived in it, a despised and lonely man. . . . Of all who visit Athens, myriads connect it with the name of Paul. . . . They think not of Cicero, of Virgil, of Germanicus, but of the wandering tent-maker. . . . He founded no church at Athens, but there . . . a church grew up. In the next century it furnished to the cause of Christianity its martyr bishops and its eloquent apologists. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 312, 313.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 369. **The Model Pastor.** The first twelve verses of 1 Thessalonians give, with mirror-like precision, the picture of the ideal pastor in his relations to his church. Paul's self-sacrificing labor, his unwearied love, his gentleness, his humility, his zeal combined with his energy, his greatness of soul, his supreme loyalty to Christ, are points in which every teacher and pastor may well follow his example.

§ 370. **The Divine Purpose in Persecution.** Paul and his companions were preserved from dangers on every hand, and from the malignant hostility of their enemies. Not only in spite of, but in consequence of, all this bitter opposition the work went on the more rapidly and church after church was established on every hand.

§ 371. **Candid Investigation, the Path to Truth.** The honorable distinction of the Berean Jews, as compared with their countrymen elsewhere, was this, that they were willing to grant an unprejudiced investigation to the things spoken by Paul, to see whether they were so. No one who has fully, fairly and honestly examined into the truth of Christianity, has ever rejected it, unless his rejection has been inspired by unwillingness to submit to its requirements.

§ 372. **Man's Instinctive Craving after God.** In every human heart there is an inborn desire to know God and to be at peace with him. The Athenian altar to AN UNKNOWN GOD was but an expression of this "dim unsatisfied longing." The gods whom the heathen discover in nature are angry deities whose wrath is to be appeased; but the God of revelation whom the Christian worships is a loving Father whose service is perfect liberty.

§ 373. **The Pride of Human Wisdom.** Paul's discreet and conciliatory prelude to his address on Mars' Hill opened the way for him to present to his audience the theme of salvation; but he gained only one convert from those whom he had sought to reach. In Athens "which represented the highest attainments in human wisdom and genius" the gospel could gain no entrance as yet. The pride and self-sufficiency of human wisdom present greater obstacles to the reception of divine truth, than ignorance, hard-heartedness, or even vice and crime.

§ 374. **Three Classes of Heroes.** As when Paul preached in Athens, so whenever the gospel is faithfully presented to men, it tends to divide them into three classes, those who openly reject the truth and mock at it, the many who hesitate and say they will hear about this matter again before they decide, and the few who at once recognize the truth as from God and cleave to it with all their hearts.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE WORK OF TIMOTHY DURING PAUL'S ABSENCE IN ATHENS: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 341, 342. 2. THE AGORA, OR MARKET: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 254-257. 3. BELIEFS OF THE EPICUREANS AND STOICS: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 148, 149. 4. THE AREOPAGUS: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 261, 262; *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 150, 151. 5. THE UNKNOWN GOD: *Ibid.*, pp. 154-156. 6. LEGENDARY ACCOUNT OF THE ORIGIN OF THE ALTAR, "TO AN UNKNOWN GOD": *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 195, 196.

**Lesson 20.—THE FOUNDING OF THE CHURCH IN CORINTH,
AND THE RETURN TO SYRIA.** The Continuation and Close
of the Second Missionary Journey.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 375. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the nature of Paul's work and experiences during the latter part of the second missionary journey, which included the establishing of the church in Corinth, and the return from Corinth to Antioch in Syria.

§ 376. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Learn as much as possible of ancient Corinth—its population, commerce, culture, wealth, luxury, and morals; and judge of Paul's reasons for choosing, as the center of a prolonged evangelistic work, a place so infamous for its corruption.

(2) Note the character of his work there; its leading incidents; his arduous toil and self-support; his reasons for so strenuously refusing support from the converts there while accepting aid from other churches; the discouragements that arose from bitter opposition, and the encouragement that came from the assurance of divine approval and help.

(3) Note the character of Paul's preaching in Corinth, its simplicity and directness; its avoidance of all rhetorical embellishments and worldly wisdom, and its constant presentation of the one great theme "Jesus Christ and him crucified." Consider whether in this style of preaching Paul was at all influenced by his recent experiences in Athens.

(4) Call attention to the chronic hostility of the Jews which finally broke out in their attempt to secure Paul's condemnation by Gallio, but which in this case resulted in their own discomfiture and humiliation.

(5) When Paul's work in Corinth was ended, follow him on his return to Syria, noting on the map his route and the places at which he stopped; then give in a few words a résumé of this journey, and the substantial results achieved by it.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL'S WORK IN CORINTH.

§ 377. **Ancient Corinth.** Corinth was the seat of government, and lay at a distance of forty miles from Athens, and was situated at the south-western extremity of the isthmus, on an elevated table land at the foot of Acrocorinthus, a mountain which towered to the skies on the south, and overlooked the city spread along its northern base. . . . Corinth had always possessed great importance, not only as a military position, as holding the keys of the Peloponnesus, but also from the extensive trade that flowed thither both by land and sea. . . . In the time of Alexander the Great, Corinth . . . was taken and utterly destroyed, and Achaia became a Roman province. Corinth lay in ruins for a century, and then Julius Cæsar founded it anew, and sent thither a Roman colony, consisting

principally of freedmen, among whom were great numbers of the Jewish race. . . .

[While in Corinth] by what a scene of iniquity was the Apostle surrounded! He who had mortified the flesh, and even refrained from marriage, that he might be the unencumbered soldier of his Divine Master, was now within a city where lasciviousness held her obscenest revels. Suffice it to say that to the temple of Venus were attached more than a thousand courtesans, under the cover of religious rites. . . . Such was the Augean stable which the Christian Hercules now addressed himself to purify. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 269–272.

§ 378. **Paul's Reasons for Going to Corinth.** The reasons which determined St. Paul to come to Corinth (over and above the discouragement he seems to have met with in Athens) were, probably, twofold. In the first place, it was a large mercantile city, in immediate connection with Rome and the west of the Mediterranean, with Thessalonica and Ephesus in the *Ægean*, and with Antioch and Alexandria in the East. The Gospel once established in Corinth, would rapidly spread elsewhere. And, again, from the very nature of the city, the Jews established there were numerous. . . . A religion which was first to be planted in the Synagogue, and was thence intended to scatter its seeds over all parts of the earth, could nowhere find a more favourable soil than among the Hebrew families at Corinth. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, p. 385.

§ 379. **Banishment of the Jews from Rome, by Claudius.** At this particular time [A.D. 52 or 53] there were a greater number of Jews in the city [Corinth] than usual; for they had lately been banished from Rome by command of the Emperor Claudius. The history of this edict is involved in some obscurity. But there are abundant passages in the contemporary Heathen writers which show the suspicion and dislike with which the Jews were regarded. Notwithstanding the general toleration, they were violently persecuted by three successive emperors; and there is good reason for identifying the edict mentioned by St. Luke with that alluded to by Suetonius, who says that Claudius drove the Jews from Rome because they were incessantly raising tumults at the instigation of a certain *Chrestus*. . . .

Some have held that there was really a Jew called Chrestus, who had excited political disturbances: others that the name is used by mistake for Christus, and that the disturbances had arisen from the Jewish expectations concerning the Messiah, or Christ. . . . We have seen how the first progress of Christianity had been the occasion of tumult among the Jewish communities in the provinces; and there is no reason why the same might not have happened in the capital itself. . . . Chrestus was a common name; Christus was not: and we have a distinct statement by Tertullian and Lactantius that in their day the former was often used for the latter. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 385, 386.

§ 380. **Tent-making and Preaching in Corinth.** It was into the midst of this mongrel and heterogeneous population of Greek adventurers and Roman bourgeois, with a tainting infusion of Phœnicians . . . that the toil-worn Jewish wanderer made his way. He entered it as he had entered Athens—a stricken and lonely worker. . . . Lest these covetous shopkeepers and traders should be able to charge him with seeking his own gain, he determined to accept nothing at their hands. There seemed to be a fair chance that he would be able to earn his bread by tent-making in a port so universally frequented. In this respect he was unusually fortunate. He found a Jew of Pontus, named Aquila, who worked at his trade with his wife Priscilla. . . .

It is probable that they were already Christians, and Paul formed with them a

life-long friendship, to which he owed many happy hours. . . . At Corinth, as subsequently at Ephesus, Paul worked in their employ, and shared in their profits. These profits, unhappily, were scanty. It was a time of general pressure, and though the Apostle toiled night and day, all his exertions were unable to keep the wolf from the door [except as he was aided by the Macedonian churches, see § 382]. . . . Even when he was working the hardest, he could still be giving instruction to all who sought him. But now, as ever, the rest of the Sabbath furnished him with his chief opportunity. On that day he was always to be found in the Jewish synagogue, and his weekly discourses produced a deep impression both on Jews and Greeks. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 315, 317, 318.

§ 381. **Silas and Timothy Arrive from Macedonia.** Paul had been labouring at Corinth some two or three months, when Silas and Timothy arrived together from Macedonia. Timothy had been despatched by Paul from Athens by sea to Thessalonica, a church which was under the particular charge of Timothy; and, having executed his mission, he had passed by land from Thessalonica to Berea, and there rejoined Silas, who had been left in care of that church. . . . The report of Timothy from Thessalonica was in the main highly satisfactory. The converts had maintained their faith against the persecution of their enemies, and, retaining their devotion to the Apostle, had been anxious for his safety as he had been for theirs, and longed to see him again. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 276, 277.

§ 382. **Paul Receives Help from the Philippians.** The arrival of Silas and Timothy was in every way calculated to give him comfort. In the first place, Paul had been enduring great privations from the famine which had of late prevailed throughout Greece. To the day of his death, he would receive no support from the Corinthian church, that his enemies (and he had many there) might not misconstrue it. He wrought night and day with his own hands, at his craft of tentmaking; yet, from the severity of the time, he could not earn the necessities of life in sufficient abundance. It was while he was in this strait that . . . [there was] brought him relief from Macedonia. The Apostle afterwards, in writing to the Corinthians, alludes to this seasonable supply, and anxiously justifies his conduct in refusing aid from the Corinthians themselves [2 Cor. 11: 7-12]. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. i, p. 277.

§ 383. **The Jews Reject the Gospel; Paul Turns to the Gentiles.** Crispus, indeed, the governor of the synagogue, had been converted with all his house. . . . But, as a body, the Jews met him with an opposition which at last found expression in the sort of language of which the Talmud furnishes some terrible specimens. No further object could be served by endeavouring to convince them, and at last he shook off the dust of his garments, and calling them to witness that he was innocent of their blood, he announced that from that day forth he should preach only to the Gentiles.

Already he had converted some Gentiles of humble and probably of slavish origin, the first among these being the household of Stephanas. With Crispus and these faithful converts, he migrated from the synagogue to a room close by, which was placed at his disposal by a proselyte of the name of Justus. In this room he continued to preach for many months. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 319.

THE MANNER OF PAUL'S PREACHING IN CORINTH.

§ 384. **Paul's Gospel to the Corinthians.** The great majority of the congregation collected by Paul and his associates, Silas and Timothy, were, no doubt, formerly pagans, and chiefly, though not entirely, from the lower classes. For in 1 Cor. 1: 26-30, Paul himself says, that there were not many wise men after the

flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, among them, but that God had chosen those that were foolish and weak in the eyes of the world, to display the more gloriously in them the power of the gospel, and to put to shame the pride of the wise and strong. The apostle had seen in Athens how little susceptibility, generally speaking, the higher and more cultivated circles had for the gospel, which so directly and firmly opposed their Sadducean or Pharisaic spirit. He had, accordingly, determined to appear in Corinth, not with the wisdom and eloquence of man, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power, with the unadorned simplicity of the glad tidings to poor sinners. He had resolved to know nothing among them, save *Jesus Christ and him crucified*, in whom, however, is found all that is needful for salvation.

This brought out all the more sharply the opposition between the world and Christianity, and left grace to operate only with the greater purity and power. The apostle, indeed, met with violent resistance from the pride of wisdom in the Greeks, the passion for wonders in the Jews, and the moral corruption of the people generally. He had also to sustain painful struggles in his own breast, . . . and needed special encouragement from the Lord in a vision. But, in spite of all, his preaching in this city was attended with uncommon success, and the church there spread its influence over the whole province of Achaia. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 274.

PAUL BEFORE GALLIO. THE RETURN TO SYRIA.

§ 385. **The Opposition of the Jews; Paul Brought before Gallio.** The Jews are again represented as the cause of the trouble and opposition. They brought Paul before Gallio with the charge that he was teaching men to worship God contrary to their law. They did not attempt to hide the real nature of the charges and there was no resort to any political accusations. . . . Gallio looked upon the whole matter as one of little moment. He was angry that they should have disturbed him and tried to make him the judge in the matter of their law. It was only a Jewish theological quarrel and they might settle it among themselves. He was willing to act as judge in matters which involved the principle of right and wrong, but in their wars about words he would take no part. With this rebuke he ordered them to be driven from his presence. But this was not the end of the matter.

They had dug a pit for another, they themselves were yet to fall into it. Their turbulence and troublesomeness had made even the mild Gallio impatient and indifferant, and the fickle mob took advantage of the opportunity to vent their dislike upon them. They laid hold of Sosthenes, who had been made ruler of the synagogue in place of Crispus who had become a Christian, and gave him a sound beating. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 189, 190.

§ 386. **St. Paul Leaves Corinth and Goes to Ephesus.** The attempt of the Jews marked the termination of St. Paul's work in Corinth. It was at least the beginning of the end. He had now laboured longer in Corinth than anywhere else since he started out from Antioch. He had organised and consolidated the Church, as we can see from his Corinthian Epistles, and now he longed once more to visit his old friends, and report what God had wrought by his means during his long absence. He tarried, therefore, yet a while, visiting doubtless the various Churches which he had established throughout all the province of Achaia, and then, accompanied by a few companions, set sail for Syria, to declare the results of his eventful mission, taking Ephesus on his way. This was his first visit to that great city, and he was probably led to pay it owing to the commercial necessities of Aquila. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 329, 330.

§ 387. **Paul's First Preaching in Ephesus.** Leaving them [Aquila and Priscilla] to establish themselves in their craft [Paul] began, under the pressure of his eagerness to reach Jerusalem, an independent course of teaching in the synagogues. . . . The Jewish population [of Ephesus] was sufficiently numerous to have a synagogue, and St. Paul, as usual, appeared in it as a teacher. . . . They [the Jews] desired him to tarry longer time with them. This was, obviously, a hopeful sign, the earnest of the fruitful labours that followed. Nowhere, among the churches that he founded, does St. Paul seem to have found so great receptivity for spiritual truth. While he looked on the Corinthians as being children requiring to be fed with milk, he saw in the Ephesians those to whom he did not shun to declare "the whole counsel of God," to whom he could, at a later date, appeal as able to measure his knowledge of the mystery of the gospel. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 305.

§ 388. **Paul again Visits Jerusalem.** [From Cæsarea] he hastened to Jerusalem, which he was now visiting for the fourth time after his conversion. He had entered it once a changed man; he had entered it a second time with a timely contribution from the Church of Antioch to the famine-stricken poor; a third time he had come to obtain a decision of the loud disputes between the Judaic and the liberal Christians which threatened, even thus early, to rend asunder the seamless robe of Christ. Four years had now elapsed, and he came once more, a weak and persecuted missionary, to seek the sympathy of the early convert, to confirm his faithful spirit of unity with them, to tell them the momentous tidings of churches founded during this his second journey, not only in Asia, but for the first time in Europe also, and even at places so important as Philippi, Thessalonica, and Corinth.

Had James, and the circle of which he was the centre, only understood how vast for the future of Christianity would be the issues of these perilous and toilsome journeys . . . with what affection and admiration would they have welcomed him! How would they have striven, by every form of kindness, of encouragement, of honour, of heartfelt prayer, to arm and strengthen him, and to fire into yet brighter lustre his grand enthusiasm, so as to prepare him in the future for sacrifices yet more heroic, for efforts yet more immense! Had anything of the kind occurred, St. Luke . . . — St. Paul himself, in his account to the Galatians of his relations to the twelve — could hardly have failed to tell us about it. So far from this, St. Luke hurries over the brief visit in the three words that "he saluted the Church." . . . There is too much reason to fear that his reception was cold and ungracious; that even if James received him with courtesy, the Judaic Christians who surrounded "the Lord's brother" did not; and even that a jealous dislike of that free position towards the Law which he established amongst his Gentile converts, led to that determination on the part of some of them to follow in his track and to undermine his influence, which, to the intense embitterment of his latter days, was so fatally successful. It must have been with a sad heart, with something even of indignation at this unsympathetic coldness, that St. Paul hurriedly terminated his visit. But none of these things moved him. He did but share them with his Lord, whom the Pharisees had hated and the Sadducees had slain. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 353.

§ 389. **Résumé of Paul's Second Missionary Journey.** [The return to Antioch] terminated Paul's second missionary journey. It was much more extensive than the first. Besides visiting the churches formerly planted by him in Cilicia and [in Galatia on his first missionary journey, he] . . . crossed over to Europe and planted Christianity in at least four cities — Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, and Corinth, — perhaps also in Athens. The time spent in this journey

has been variously estimated. In Corinth we are told that he resided for at least a year and a half; and to this has to be added the time spent in [revisiting the churches in Galatia and in] preaching the gospel in . . . Macedonia. Wiesler supposes two years and six months: but this is too short a period to embrace all that Paul performed: in all probability, the journey occupied at least three years. If we suppose, as is most probable, that he left Antioch in the year A.D. 51 [52], his return may be fixed in the year A.D. 54. — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 182.



Map of St. Paul's second missionary journey.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 390. **The Laborer Worthy of his Hire.** Paul's example in earning his bread while preaching at Corinth is not a rule for others. He distinctly states that peculiar conditions alone warranted his course of action. People value most the things that cost them most, while the things that cost them least are least appreciated.

§ 391. **Turning to the Gentiles.** Even as the antagonism of the Corinthian Jews shut them out from the truth, so now the indifference of men who have long heard the gospel places them beyond the reach of salvation. By rejecting the gospel again and again, they ultimately lose the capacity of being impressed by the truth when they hear it. The history of the Salvation Army of our own day is an illustration of the modern "turning of the Gentiles."

§ 392. **Preaching Christ and him Crucified.** The simple truth of a Saviour's love for sinful men is the surest motive with which to appeal to the human heart. To the "Greeks" this is "foolishness," but to millions it is the power of God unto salvation. Learned dissertations on speculative truths have no place in the pulpit when men are hungering for the Bread of Life.

§ 393. **Divine Encouragement for the Despondent.** As Paul, when sorely depressed at Corinth, was greatly comforted and stimulated by the divine assurance given him concerning his work in that city, so to every child of God seasons of depression and discouragement will come; but to him who desires above everything else to submit his life to divine guidance, light will arise in darkness, and through prayer and communion with God he will feel himself girded for toil, strengthened for trial, and inspired for victory.

§ 394. **The Need and the Power of Sympathy.** Paul was greatly comforted by the coming of Silas and Timothy to Corinth. Though it is the fate of great men to stand alone, and to be little understood, Paul's ardent and unselfish love, craving human sympathy, leaped over the distance between himself and other men, and drew them to him not only because he needed them, but because they needed him. So Christ, though he stands farthest apart from humanity, comes nearest to us, enters most perfectly into our feelings, and draws every responsive heart into fellowship with himself.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. AQUILA AND PRISCILLA: Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 292*b*-295*a*; Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 232. 2. CLAUDIUS CÆSAR: Ency. Brit., vol. v, Art., "Claudius," pp. 816*b*, 817*a*; Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Claudius." 3. THE NAZIRITE VOW: Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., Nazarite, p. 2073 ff. 4. TWO VIEWS OF THE VOW (Acts 18: 18); TAKEN BY AQUILA: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, p. 422 and note; TAKEN BY PAUL: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, p. 299, note; *Neander*, Planting and Training, p. 203, note; Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 240. 5. TITUS JUSTUS: Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 297*b*, 298*a*. 6. GALLIO, THE PROCONSUL OF ACHAIA: Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Gallio." 7. THE RETURN TO ANTIOCH BY WAY OF JERUSALEM: *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 202-207.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS

ON

THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 21.—ERRORS OF THE THESSALONIANS CORRECTED. The Expectation of the Church Concerning the Coming Again of Christ.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 395. **Design of the Lesson.** To show Paul's deep solicitude for the welfare of the church in Thessalonica from which he had been suddenly driven away, his joy over their steadfastness, and his instructions and counsels in view of the anticipated speedy coming again of the Lord.

§ 396. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) After reading Note 33 in the Progressive Grade Quarterly which states the reasons that led Paul to write the two letters to the Thessalonians, read carefully the epistles themselves so as to get a general idea of their contents.

(2) Note that in these letters, as Paul's usual custom is, he begins by giving thanks for the faith, love, and steadfastness of those whom he addresses. If reproofs or corrections follow, the commendations come first.

(3) Recall the sayings of Jesus, and of the angels after his ascension, which led his disciples to expect his speedy return; show how this expectation extended throughout the early church, and how it rested on the teachings of the apostles themselves (see 1 Thes. 4: 13—5: 11; Jas. 5: 7-9; 2 Pet. 3: 1-13).

(4) Emphasize the fact that even though the apostles themselves mistook regarding the actual time of Christ's coming again, and though our Lord himself did not know when it would occur (Mt. 24: 36), this does not prove that they were in error respecting the fact itself. The certainty that Christ will come again rests on his own words, though we are not permitted to know the time.

(5) Point out what was the natural effect in the church at Thessalonica of an undue emphasis put on the hope of Christ's immediate second advent—how it disturbed the peace and comfort of the church, leading some to give up their daily work, to spend their time in idle waiting, and to subsist on the charity of others.

(6) Call attention finally to some of the comforting assurances that came to the Thessalonians respecting their friends who had already fallen asleep in Jesus, the certainty that all who believe in him shall ultimately be with him, and the necessity in the meantime for watchfulness and sobriety.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

For further notes on the work of Paul at Thessalonica, and the church at that place, see §§ 357-362, Lesson 19, pp. 106-108.

§ 397. **The First Epistle to the Thessalonians.** (1) *Occasion of its Writing.* — The persecution which had driven the apostle from Thessalonica soon also broke out against the church. Thus it was not the mere yearning of personal love and attachment, but also care and anxiety that urged him to hasten back to Thessalonica. Twice he resolved to do so, but circumstances prevented him. Accordingly, no longer able to master his anxiety, he sent Timotheus . . . in order to receive from him information concerning the state of the church, to strengthen the Thessalonians by exhortation, and to encourage them to faithful endurance. The return of Timotheus, and the message which he brought, were the occasion of the Epistle.

This message was in the main consolatory. The church, in spite of persecution and trial, continued steadfast. . . . But Timotheus had also to tell of defect and incompleteness. The church had not yet succeeded in preserving itself unstained by the two cardinal vices of heathenism—sensuality and covetousness; they had not everywhere shown to the presbyters due respect and obedience; and in consequence of their thought and feeling being inordinately directed to the advent of Christ, an unsettled and excited habit prevailed, which led to the neglect of the duties of their earthly calling, and to idleness. Lastly, the church was in great perplexity concerning the fate of their deceased Christian friends, being uncertain whether only those who were alive, or whether also deceased Christians, participated in the blessings of the advent. . . .

(2) *Design.* — The design of the Epistle accordingly was threefold. 1. The apostle, whilst testifying his joy for their conduct hitherto, would strengthen and encourage the church to persevering steadfastness in the confession of Christianity. 2. He would exhort them to relinquish those moral weaknesses by which they were still enfeebled. 3. He would calm and console them concerning the fate of the deceased by a more minute instruction in reference to the advent. — *Meyer*: Commentary, Thessalonians, pp. 433, 434.

§ 398. **The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians.** After writing the First Epistle St. Paul received further tidings from Thessalonica, which moved him to write a *Second*. The situation of the Church remained, for the most part, the same, but accentuated in its leading features. We gather from the opening Acts of Thanksgiving that the storm of persecution was still more violent and the fidelity of the church even more conspicuous than when the Apostle wrote a few months before. . . .

There are two things which he is wishful to say. First and chiefly, *about the Second Advent.* . . . A report was circulated, claiming prophetic origin, and alleged to have St. Paul's authentication, to the effect that "the day of the Lord had arrived" and He must be looked for immediately. This the Apostle declares to be a deception. And he gives reasons . . . why so speedy a consummation was impossible. . . .

The other object . . . is to *reprove the disorderly fraction of the Church.* . . . It was connected with the prevalent excitement on the subject of Christ's advent. This expectation furnished an excuse and incentive to the neglect of ordinary labour. The Apostle now takes the offenders severely to task, and directs their brethren to refuse support from the funds of the Church to such as persisted in idleness, and to avoid their company. — *Findlay*: In Cambridge Bible, Thessalonians, pp. 25, 26.

§ 399. **Time and Place of Writing.** The two Epistles were written . . . from Corinth; not from Athens, as it is stated in the concluding note, or "subscription," attached to the Epistles in the MSS. followed by the Authorised English Version. They were both composed during the Apostle's residence of eighteen months in Corinth, extending from Autumn 53 to Spring 55 A.D. (possibly 52-54). They belong therefore, as nearly as we can judge, to the *winter of 53-54 A.D.*,—the last year of the Emperor Claudius.—*Findlay*: In Cambridge Bible, Thessalonians, p. 27.

§ 400. **The General Structure of Paul's Epistles.** Except when special circumstances, as in the Epistle to the Corinthians, modify his ordinary plan, his letters consist, as a rule, of six parts, viz.:—1, a solemn salutation; 2, an expression of thankfulness to God for His work among those to whom he is writing; 3, a section devoted to religious doctrine; 4, a section devoted to practical exhortation; 5, a section composed of personal details and greetings; and 6, the final autograph benediction which served to mark the authenticity of the Epistle.—*Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 343, 344.

§ 401. **The City of Thessalonica.** Thessalonica was formerly called Therma, and the gulf on which it stood was named *Thermaicus Sinus*, on account of the hot salt springs which abounded in the vicinity. . . . The origin of the present name has been variously accounted for. According to Strabo, Therma was rebuilt by Cassander, who added to it the population of three small towns near it, and called it Thessalonica, after his wife, a daughter of Philip. Stephen of Byzantium records, that Philip . . . gave the name in honour of his daughter. . . . Xerxes, according to Herodotus, paused at Therma, while his fleet cruised in the gulf, and his army lay at a short distance . . . Thessalonica still survives . . . [as] Saloniki. . . .

Thessalonica, rebuilt about B.C. 315, is first mentioned by Polybius and Livy as a great naval station. . . . At the period of the first Roman civil war it was occupied by the party of Pompey, but during the second it sided with Anthony and Octavius, and was on that account made an *urbs libera* [free city]. . . . Thessalonica has passed through many vicissitudes, but it is still the second city in European Turkey. . . . In the third century it was made a Roman colony, and it was the great bulwark of the empire during the Gothic inroads and the six Slavonian wars. . . . Thessalonica was three times taken—by the Saracens in 904, by Tancred and the Normans in 1185, and by the Turks under Amurath II, in 1430. Numerous and imposing monuments of its earlier greatness are still to be found in it. The old Roman road forms at the present day the main thoroughfare, and two of its arches may yet be seen.—*Eadie*: Commentary, Thessalonians, pp. 1-3.

PAUL'S THANKSGIVING ON ACCOUNT OF THE THESSALONIANS.

§ 402. **Occasion of Paul's Gratitude.** The expression of thankfulness on behalf of the Thessalonians is peculiarly full and earnest. It is an overflow of heartfelt gratitude, as indeed the special characteristic of the letter is its sweetness. St. Paul tells them that he is always giving thanks o God for them all, mentioning them in his prayers, filled with the ever-present memory of the activity of their faith, the energy of their love, the patience of their hope. He reminds them of the power and fulness and spiritual unction which had accompanied his preaching of the Gospel, and how they had become imitators of him and of Christ with such spiritual gladness in the midst of such deep affliction that they had become models to all the Churches of Northern and Southern Greece, and their faith had been as a trumpet-blast through all the Mediterranean coasts.—*Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 330.

§ 403. **The Three Christian Graces.** The salutation in St. Paul's epistles is regularly followed by thanksgiving. . . . Before he thinks of congratulating, teaching, exhorting, admonishing, he gives God thanks for the tokens of His grace in the Thessalonians. . . . The Apostle recalls, in each particular case, the special manifestations of Christian character which inspire his gratitude. Sometimes, as in 1st Corinthians, they are less spiritual — gifts, rather than graces; utterance and knowledge, without charity; sometimes, as here, they are eminently spiritual — faith, love, and hope. The conjunction of these three in the earliest of Paul's letters is worthy of remark. They occur again in the well-known passage in 1 Cor. 13. . . . They occur a third time in one of the later epistles — that to the Colossians — and in the same order as here. . . .

But it is not simply faith, love, and hope that are in question here: "we remember," says the Apostle, "your work of faith and *labour* of love and *patience* of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ." We call faith, love, and hope the Christian graces. . . . They have a beauty of their own . . . it is a beauty not in form or colour, not appealing to the eye or the imagination, but only to the spirit which has seen and loved Christ, and loves His likeness in whatever guise. . . . Remembering their work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, in the presence of our God and Father, the Apostle gives thanks to God always for them all. — *Denney*: Thessalonians, pp. 21, 23, 25, 26, 32.

THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD.

§ 404. **The Fact of the Second Coming of Christ.** The Scriptures, in both Testaments, abound in prophetic announcements of divine manifestations which are to be concluded by a final consummation in the personal and permanent appearance of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. The announcements are made in such phrases as, "the end of the world," "coming," "appearing," "revelation," "the day of the Lord," "the last day," "the great day," "that day." The prophecies themselves cover a vast extent of time, and apparently relate to a great number of religious epochs. The observance of what may be called prophetic prospective makes it extremely difficult, if not simply impossible, fully to interpret the prophecies until after their fulfillment. We know that the phrase "end of the world" was applied by the apostle to the end of Judaism and the introduction of the gospel; . . . and was also used by our Lord to denote the period of his final appearing. . . . The phrase "coming of the Son of Man," is in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew referred, both to the destruction of Jerusalem, and to the literal end of the mediatorial dispensation and of the present cosmical constitution. . . .

We need not wonder, therefore, that though there is a very great degree of unanimity among the theologians regarding the fact of the final personal coming of our Lord, there yet exists great diversity of views regarding the preliminaries and adjuncts of that coming. The most that we can venture to say with confidence is, that, prior to the personal coming of Christ, the gospel will have achieved its widest and ablest possible results under the dispensation of the Spirit. The Jews, as a nation, will have been made partakers of the blessings of Christianity, which itself will have come into a deadly and final conflict with error and irreligion; then Christ will suddenly, unexpectedly, but unmistakably, appear; and his appearance will be followed by a simultaneous resurrection of both the righteous and wicked dead, with an instantaneous change of all the living, and by a final and an irrevocable dismissal of the righteous and the wicked to their final and irrevocable estate. — *Robinson*: Christian Theology, pp. 347, 348.

§ 405. **The Day of the Lord.** *The day of the Lord*, yet future, is the day on which, most assuredly, all thoughts will turn to him, whether willingly or by

constraint, whether in terror or in joy; the day in which his truth will silence into nothingness all human errors and guesses at truth, in which his justice will take the place of all that is named justice, rightly or wrongly, among the sons of men; the day in which everything else but he will be lost sight of, and will be as though it were not, in which the eternal reality of his relation to the world and to man will also be the acknowledged reality. It is the day on which he will bring the vast and complex moral account between himself and his responsible creatures to a close — to a final, irreversible decision. As surely as we have seen this morning's sunlight, we shall hereafter behold the eternal Judge upon his throne, the countless multitudes before him, the division between his creatures deep and irreversible, the disciplined activities of his angels, the issues on this side and on that, as all gradually settles down into the last unchangeable award. *Liddon*: In Butler's Bible Work, New Test., vol. ii, p. 494.

ERRORS CONCERNING THE COMING AGAIN OF THE LORD CORRECTED.

§ 406. **The Time of the Parousia.** [Paul] does not declare their error to consist in the fact that they were expecting the Parousia in the *near future*, whereas that event was to be looked for only in the *remote future*; he does not say to them, that they need not be troubled with reference to the dying of these friends so early, for death had come to them only a little earlier than it would come to themselves; and that they had fallen into a mistake as to the whole matter. On the other hand, he says, in substance, They had not lost the future blessedness by dying before the Lord comes. When He comes, they will rise, and we who survive, (you who are grieving for them, and I), shall be caught up to meet them. As he says to the Corinthians five years later, *The dead will be raised, and we shall be changed.* . . .

The following facts are to be remarked in connection with the passages in Paul's writings which bear upon this subject: — (1) None of them are in their expressions inconsistent with the expectation of the coming of the Lord at an early period. (2) Some of them, although not necessarily carrying with them this idea, gain a special force and emphasis, if they are interpreted as involving it. Others indicate, by the peculiar language employed, such an expectation, if the language is to be interpreted naturally and strictly. (3) If, however, the Apostle had such an expectation, he did not have it in such a way as to involve necessarily a belief that none of his readers would die before the Parousia, or a feeling that it was absolutely certain that he should not himself die. . . . (4) We find statements in his writings which show that he thought that certain things were to take place before the end — the filling up of the times of the Gentiles, the conversion of the Jews, the manifestation of the man of sin. The date of the Parousia, accordingly, must have been, to his view, so far removed from the date of the writing of these Epistles as to allow time for the accomplishment of these things before it should arrive. (5) As the time of the end is expressly excluded by Christ from the subjects on which Divine revelation is made, the apostles may naturally not have been enlightened in regard to this matter, as they were with reference to other subjects. — *Dwight*: In Meyer's Commentary, Thessalonians, pp. 540, 541.

§ 407. **Daily Life of the Christian.** Ver. 10 [2 Thes. 3: 10] seems to show that this tendency to give up this world's work was an attendant, in many cases, upon the entrance into the Christian life — the new thoughts, the spiritual atmosphere, the future, making the daily duties in earthly things seem unnecessary. Warnings against tendencies to such errors in different lines are given in

the N. T., and must have been found needful by the Apostolic preachers. . . . [The word used] implies a busying themselves with things belonging to the sphere of others, and neglecting those of their own sphere. . . . The fact that the exhortation and suggestion . . . are in each of the two Epistles so closely connected with the passage which relates to the Parousia . . . is, not improbably, indicative of a connection between the mistaken notions, which members of the Thess. church had respecting the time of that great event, and their neglect of their earthly business. These mistaken notions may have been a cause of this neglect. — *Dwight*: In Meyer's Commentary, Thessalonians, p. 633.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 408. **A Genuine Christian Life may Coexist with Many Errors.** Paul found some things among the Thessalonians to reprove and correct, yet he praised them for their genuine Christian faith and life. The recognition of such a life should give us great joy, even though it may be obscured by what we regard as errors in doctrine or faults in conduct.

§ 409. **The Fact and the Time of the Second Advent.** The fact of the coming again of Christ is one of the conspicuous teachings of the Bible, involving, as it does, the fulfillment of prophecy and the consummation of all things. The time is known to God alone. It can not be figured out from the obscure and ambiguous language of prophecy. All such efforts end in shame and confusion.

§ 410. **The Proper Attitude of Every Christian toward the Fact of the Coming Again of Christ.** Faith in the certainty of this event; watchfulness lest his coming find us asleep; sobriety and fidelity in the discharge of appointed tasks that it may not overtake us unprepared. Neither in fanatical impatience antedating that blessed epiphany, nor in unbelief postdating it; for it is as wrong to proclaim that he will come this year or this decade, as it is to say that he will not come for a thousand years.

§ 411. **The Practical Effect of the Doctrine.** Not to encourage idleness and disorder, but to stimulate to more earnest activity; lest if the time should be short, his coming suddenly "whether at even, or at midnight, or at cockcrow, or in the morning," may not find us sleeping or rioting, but diligently accomplishing every task that our absent Lord has entrusted to our care.

§ 412. **Comfort Concerning those Asleep in Christ.** Death is not annihilation, but a passing sleep, a transition from a circumscribed life in the body to an unrestricted life in the spirit, a putting on of immortality, a being forever with the Lord.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. ON THE TIME AND PLACE OF WRITING 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS: Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Thessalonians," pp. 322*b*-323*oa*; also Introductions to the Epistles in Commentaries on the same. 2. THE GENUINENESS OF 1 AND 2 THESSALONIANS. Ibid. 3. SOME HISTORICAL DIFFICULTIES IN 2 THESSALONIANS: Ency. Brit., vol. xxiii, Art., "Thessalonians, Epistles to the," p. 297. 4. DEATH AS A SLEEP: *Lange*, Commentary, Thessalonians, p. 75. 5. POSSIBLE REASONS FOR THE DELAY OF THE FINAL COMING OF CHRIST: Ibid., pp. 78, 79. 6. APOCALYPTIC TEACHINGS IN 2 THESSALONIANS: *Meyer*, Commentary, Thessalonians, pp. 605-622. 7. THE MAN OF SIN: *Denney*, Epistles to the Thessalonians, pp. 305-319; *Eadie*, Commentary, Thessalonians, pp. 329-370.

**Lesson 22.—THE CONFLICT CONCERNING THE GENTILES AND
THE JEWISH LAW IN GALATIA. Paul's Defense of
Christian Liberty.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§413. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Paul met the efforts of the Judaizing teachers to bring the Gentile converts in Galatia under the yoke of the Jewish law; and how, against their false teachings, he established the great principle of Christian freedom from the law, and of salvation by faith in Christ.

§414. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson read attentively Note 36, and Remark 9 in Appendix (Progressive grade), or the Lesson Talk (Intermediate grade). Then read §417 in the *MANUAL* so as to get a clear conception of the date of the epistle, noting that according to the view presented in these lessons as to the location of the Galatian churches, this must have been one of the first, if not the very first of Paul's epistles. If commentaries are consulted, note also that all those which present the old view of the location of the Galatian churches, must put the date of this epistle some years later, that is, during the third, instead of the second, missionary journey.

(2) Read carefully, also, what is said in §415 about the authorship, object, and critical value of the epistle, not so much for the purpose of discussing these subjects in the class, as for the purpose of getting some conception of the extraordinary value of this epistle, and the impregnable position it occupies against assaults on the Scriptural history of the apostolic age.

(3) Show that the attack of the Judaizers was of a twofold nature, on Paul's authority as an apostle, and on his teaching that the gospel had set aside the law as a condition of salvation.

(4) Note that he met the former attack in the first and second chapters, wherein he declared that his appointment as an apostle was received directly from Christ himself, and that this made him independent of the original apostles, who had fully recognized his apostolic authority, and his divine mission to the Gentiles. He was logically forced to establish this point before he could proceed to the next.

(5) Having proved himself a true apostle, he next proves the authoritativeness of his teachings. Notice that he now enters on the main theme of the epistle. Explain the argument by which he proves that faith preceded the law, that the law could save no one but only brought a curse upon those who trusted in it, and how Christ has freed us from this curse, and brought us into spiritual liberty.

**LIBRARY EXTRACTS.
PRELIMINARY.**

§415. **The Epistle to the Galatians.** (1) *Authorship.*—Of all the Epistles which bear the characteristic marks of St. Paul's style, this one stands the

foremost. . . . Its authorship has never been doubted. But that authorship is also upheld by external testimony. Irenæus quotes the Epistle by name. . . . There are many . . . distinct allusions [to it] in the works of Ignatius, Polycarp, and Justin. . . .

(2) *Object*.—The object . . . of the Epistle was (1) to defend his own apostolic authority; and (2) to expose the judaistic error by which they [the Galatians] were being deceived. Accordingly, it contains two parts, the apologetic and the polemic. These are naturally followed by a hortatory conclusion.—*Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iii, Prolegomena, pp. 1, 3.

§ 416. **Critical Value of the Epistle.** Antiquity has nothing to show more notable in its kind, or more precious, than this letter of Paul to the Churches of Galatia. It takes us back, in some respects nearer than any other document we possess, to the beginnings of Christian theology and the Christian Church. In it the spiritual consciousness of Christianity first reveals itself in its distinctive character and its full strength, free from the trammels of the past, realizing the advent of the new kingdom of God that was founded in the death of Christ. . . . Buried for a thousand years under the weight of the Catholic legalism, the teaching of this Epistle came to life again in the rise of Protestantism. Martin Luther put it to his lips as a trumpet to blow the reveillé of the Reformation. . . . The Epistle to the Galatians is the charter of Evangelical faith.

The historical criticism of the present century has brought this writing once more to the front of the conflict of faith. . . . Its interpretation forms the pivot of the most thoroughgoing recent discussions touching the beginnings of Christian history and the authenticity of the New Testament record. The Galatian Epistle is, in fact, the key of New Testament Apologetics. Round it the Roman and Corinthian Letters group themselves, forming together a solid, impregnable quaternion, and supplying a fixed startingpoint and an indubitable test for the examination of the critical questions belonging to the Apostolic age.

Whatever else may be disputed, it is agreed that there was an apostle Paul, who wrote these four Epistles to certain Christian societies gathered out of heathenism, communities numerous, widely scattered, and containing men of advanced intelligence; and this within thirty years of the death of Jesus Christ. Every critic must reckon with this fact. The most sceptical criticism makes a respectful pause before our Epistle. Hopeless of destroying its testimony, Rationalism treats it with an exaggerated deference; and seeks to extract evidence from it against its companion witnesses amongst the New Testament writings. This attempt, however misdirected, is a signal tribute to the importance of the document, and to the force with which the personality of the writer and the conditions of the time have stamped themselves upon it.—*Findlay*: Galatians, pp. 3-5.

§ 417. **Date of the Epistle.** The date of the Epistle remains to be considered. It is well known that Lightfoot determined this almost exclusively by consideration of its style and character. He presented in striking character its close resemblance to the second Epistle to the Corinthians and to the Epistle to the Romans, especially to the latter, and argued from it confidently that it was written between these two in the autumn of 57. . . . The force of such a presumption depends largely on circumstances; a man may well repeat the same thoughts and the same expressions at considerable intervals, if the intervening tenor of his life and environment continue constant. And the tenor of St. Paul's life after his conversion had been in one respect singularly uniform. He was engaged for many years in a prolonged controversy with Judaism, wherever he went. The doctrines of faith and works, of law and grace, which fill so large a space in the two Epistles to the Galatians and Romans, had been stamped on his mind once for all by a sudden

revulsion against his rigid Pharisaic training; they are asserted in his first recorded address (Acts 13: 38, 39) in the same language as in these epistles. . . .

But the known facts of 57 supply a further objection to that particular date. Early in that year St. Paul wrote to the churches of Galatia and Achaia, instructing them to institute weekly collections for the church of Jerusalem. These letters were the sequel of a previous correspondence, and Achaia had responded the year before (2 Cor. 9: 2), while Galatia had anticipated its sister churches (1 Cor. 16: 1). The collections at Corinth were not completed in the autumn of 57, and the fund was not presented at Jerusalem till Pentecost, 58. In the meantime, every epistle and every speech of St. Paul testifies his deep interest in the fund. Yet the Epistle to the Galatians attributed the desire to remember the poor in Judæa to the Jerusalem apostles; it mentions St. Paul's ready acquiescence only in the abstract (Gal. 2: 10), and admonishes them in general terms to do good to the household of faith (Gal. 6: 10), but makes no allusion whatever to the fund in progress, either by way of commendation or of dispraise. This silence is to me inexplicable on the hypothesis that it was written after the letters of 56-57. It belongs surely to an earlier time, when the thought of such a fund was working silently in the mind of the writer, and had not yet borne fruit in action.

I find further in the Epistle three distinct notes of time: (1) It was written after the Jerusalem conference and the subsequent collision at Antioch, and apparently soon after, if we may judge from the vividness of the narrative; (2) it was written after a second visit to Galatia, for in Gal. 4: 13 the evangelisation of Galatia is described as *the former occasion*, implying one later visit; (3) it was probably written not long after this second visit; for in Gal. 1: 4 the apostle describes the present revolt against his doctrine and apostolic authority as a rapid change, contrasting it apparently with the loyalty which he had hitherto found amongst his converts.

Now the date of the second visit to the Galatian churches depends entirely on the view adopted as to their locality. For St. Paul paid his second visit to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch during the summer of 51, crossing Taurus after May, and sailing from Troas before the winter season; whereas he certainly did not found churches in north Galatia before that year, if at all, nor pay his second visit till three years later. The alternative presented therefore for our choice is of an epistle written to the converts in south Galatia in 51-2, or to those in north Galatia in 54-5. The verdict of history appears to me decisive in favour of the earlier date. — *Rendell*: In The Expositor, April, 1894, pp. 260-262.

PAUL'S INDIGNANT REBUKE OF THE GALATIAN APOSTASY.

§ 418. *Paul's Vindication of his Apostleship.* In his letters to the Thessalonians St. Paul gives himself no title; here, on the other hand, he not only calls himself an apostle, but takes pains to indicate that for his apostolic standing he is indebted neither primarily nor subordinately to any man or body of men, but to God alone. . . . There are those who assail his independence, and desire to make out that he is either no apostle at all, or one subordinate to the eleven, and therefore bound to conform in opinion and action to their authority; and all this in order to undermine his influence as a teacher of views which the assailants regard with aversion. Fully aware how closely belief in his authority as a teacher is connected with continued adherence to his doctrine, the apostle commences with this topic, and sets himself in a thorough, earnest way to demonstrate the originality of his gospel, and his entire freedom as the apostle of the Gentiles from all dependence on the other apostles. — *Bruce*: St. Paul, pp. 55, 56.

§ 419. **Paul's Defense of his Gospel.** Their Jewish teachers said that Paul was shifty and complaisant, and that he did not preach the real Gospel. He tells them that it is they who are perverters of the Gospel, and that if they, or any one of them, or any one else, even an angel, preaches contrary to what he preached, let the ban—the *cherem*—fall on him. He said this before, and to show them that it is not a mere angry phrase, he repeats it more emphatically now, and appeals to it as a triumphant proof that whatever they could charge him with having done and said before, now, at any rate, his language should be unmistakably plain. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, pp. 433, 434.

PAUL'S DEFENSE OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY.

§ 420. **Paul's Reproof of the Galatians.** In the concluding verses of the preceding chapter the Apostle has not been directly addressing the Galatians. He has rather been following up his rebuke to Peter by an argument—a soliloquy—ending in a *reductio ad absurdum*. A doctrine which practically makes the death of Christ superfluous is impious and revolting. 'And is this the doctrine which you were lightly disposed to accept? O foolish Galatians, to what spell of sorcery have you succumbed? Christ Crucified was lifted up before you as the object of faith. Instead of looking away from all else to Jesus Christ alone, you allowed your eyes to wander to the Law and your own works, and so yielded to the deadly fascination of these Judaizing teachers.' . . . The change so sudden and senseless, seems like the effect supposed to be produced by magical arts . . . —the spell which was supposed to be cast over persons, especially children, by the influence of the *evil eye*. — *Perowne* : In Cambridge Bible, Galatians, p. 27.

§ 421. **The Excellence of Faith.** The Apostle makes a personal appeal to their own experience. . . . He confines himself to one question, which they alone could answer, the answer to which is decisive. 'Was it from (as the fruit of) the works of the Law that ye received the Spirit, or from the preaching of faith?' . . . The Law never bringeth the Holy Ghost, but only teacheth what we ought to do: therefore it justifieth not. But the Gospel bringeth the Holy Ghost, because it teacheth what we ought to receive. . . . Therefore the Law and the Gospel are two contrary doctrines. To put righteousness therefore in the Law, is nothing else but to fight against the Gospel. — *Perowne* : In Cambridge Bible, Galatians, pp. 28, 29.

§ 422. **The Function of the Law.** The argument of the apostle is: The law, far from being a means whereby the Spirit and His gracious comfort are received, is, on the contrary, simply one whereby the abyss of sin within man becomes manifest in outward acts. Man's state is sin. The law becomes the occasion for the expression of this state in transgression. So the law is both the revealer of sin (*original*) and the occasion for sin (*actual*). Its influence is to bring the deep-seated corruption to the surface, and evoke the symptoms that show its real nature. . . . This is hinted at even by the remark of Meyer: "Previously there were sins, but no transgressions." — *Jacobs* : In Meyer's Commentary, Galatians, p. 160.

§ 423. **Relation of the Law and the Promise.** Without doubt, the saying of the new teachers which had done most to shake the Galatians' faith was that ancient, ever powerful phrase: "We are the children of Abraham." Salvation belongs to the elect race alone. Now, God has given in circumcision a sign by which the children of Abraham are to be known. Those who are without it do not belong to the people of God, and can have no share in their privileges. This is the reasoning that the apostle had to overthrow. For this theocratic and narrow Messianism, Paul will substitute the great universal scheme, the spiritual history

of the kingdom of God and its revelation upon earth. To the carnal descent from Abraham, he will oppose the spiritual and only true filiation—that of faith. He will appeal, in his turn, to the promise made to the father of the faithful; he will show in what manner salvation is connected with it, and how the law is related to it. He will thus reconstruct the genuine tradition of Israel; and it will be seen whether he or his enemies are its true representatives.

We can now understand why the faith of Abraham plays such an important part in Pauline theology. It was not arbitrarily that the apostle chose this example, rather than another. The promise made to the patriarch was the common basis of argument, both for Paul and the Judaizers; and upon this promise and its accompanying conditions a keen debate was sure to arise, for this was the crucial question. The whole discussion turns upon this first point. If the Law qualifies and limits the Promise, it is plain that it will continue to be the eternal condition of salvation. — *Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, pp. 145, 146.

§424. **Christian Liberty Asserted.** Liberty came with Jesus Christ. . . . [Paul] has hinted already at the truth that with Christ the era of liberty or true sonship began, but he is able now to make a more adequate statement of the fact, in connection with the figure of the heir in a state of pupilage, which gives it an effective setting, *and brings out the epoch-making significance of the advent of Jesus in the general religious history of the world.* In terms of that figure he represents the advent as marking the point at which mankind, the son of God, arrived at its majority. Then commenced the era of grace, of liberty, of sonship, of the new humanity in which is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, but all one in Christ. . . . The subject of redemption being under the law, the Redeemer also came under law, that by this act of grace He might put an end to the state of legal bondage. . . . The objective ideal significance of Christ's coming being that it inaugurated the new era of filial freedom—prison doors opened, children grown to manhood, the heir no longer a minor, it is easy to see what duty is incumbent on the Christian. It is to understand the nature of the new era in which he lives, to enter sympathetically into its spirit, and subjectively to realize its lofty ideal. Obligation lies on him to be free indeed, as a son of God arrived at his majority. — *Bruce* : St. Paul, pp. 65-67.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§425. **Severity Sometimes the Greatest Kindness.** An amputation may at times be necessary in order to save life. A truly kind surgeon will not refuse to perform it because it hurts. Paul's language respecting the Judaizers, as well as Christ's language concerning the Pharisees was real kindness to all concerned, for it revealed the greatness of the peril involved in the errors that were exposed and condemned.

§426. **Faith and Works.** Paul seems at first sight to be in direct conflict with James touching the value and efficacy of faith and works. But a closer examination shows that each attaches a different meaning to these words. By "faith" Paul means that living principle which binds the believer to Christ, but James means a mere intellectual assent to truth; by "works" Paul means efforts to keep the law as a condition of salvation, but James means those Christian graces and activities which naturally proceed from a living faith in Christ. Both Paul and James were right. No man can be saved by a mere intellectual faith, or by mere obedience to law. Every man can be saved by an inward faith in Christ which shows itself in loving obedience to him.

§427. **How the Death of Christ Affects our Relation to the Law.** By the death of Christ believers are forever freed from the whole law, ceremonial

and moral, as a condition of salvation; but the moral law still remains binding as a rule of life. The liberty of the gospel is not license to indulge in evil, but, on the contrary, it deepens and intensifies the demands of the moral law (Mt. 5: 17-22, 27, 28).

§ 428. **The Adoptions of Sons.** The law at the most can only bring those who obey it into the condition of bondservants or slaves, for obedience in that case does not spring from inward love of the law but from external authority. Faith, however, brings those who exercise it into a new and personal relation to God whereby they are received as his children, he becomes their loving Father, and obedience to his will springs from the natural instinct of love and not from outward constraint.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PAUL'S APOSTOLIC COMMISSION AS ARGUED IN THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS: *Sabatier*, Apostle Paul, pp. 142-145. 2. THE ARGUMENT IN PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS: *Ibid.*, pp. 145-152. 3. PRACTICAL CONCLUSIONS FROM THE ARGUMENT IN THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS: *Ibid.*, pp. 152-155. 4. THE DESIGN OF THE LAW: *Findlay*, Epistle to the Galatians, ch. 14. 5. THE STORY OF HAGAR: *Ibid.*, ch. 19. 6. THE JEWISH AND THE CHRISTIAN COVENANTS COMPARED: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 439, 440. 7. WARNING AGAINST THE ABUSE OF LIBERTY: *Bruce*, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, p. 69; *Cowles*, The Shorter Epistles, p. 52. 8. PAUL'S RELATION TO PETER, JAMES, AND JOHN: *Lightfoot*, St. Paul's Epistle to the Galatians, pp. 129-212.

Lesson 23.—PAUL'S MINISTRY IN EPHESUS. The First Part of the Third Missionary Journey.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 429. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how at the beginning of the third missionary journey Paul visited the churches in Galatia, and how under his subsequent long ministry in Ephesus not only an important church grew up in that great stronghold of heathen worship, but how the whole of proconsular Asia was leavened by the gospel.

§ 430. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson note what is said in § 431 (2) about Paul's line of travel from Antioch in Syria to Ephesus, and the corroboration which it gives to the view that the Galatian churches were those of Derbe, Lystra, etc.

(2) Call attention to the situation, magnitude, importance, wealth, luxury and fame of the city of Ephesus; to the throngs of magicians, and impostors of all sorts who there traded on the credulity and superstition of the people; but especially to the magnificent temple of Diana, which with its enormous wealth and pompous rituals was the center of a worship that made Ephesus one of the worst hotbeds of immorality and vice in the ancient world.

(3) Connect these facts with Paul's three years' ministry in Ephesus; show his wisdom in choosing as his field of work such a magnificent center of influence, and his confidence in the power of the gospel to purify elements so corrupt.

(4) Notice that the incident of the rebaptism of John's disciples, however interesting in itself and suggestive of historical questions, is not vitally connected with the apostle's work in Ephesus, and may be passed with a brief statement.

(5) Mark how the power of Paul's ministry penetrated not only the city, as evidenced in the burning of the books devoted to the magical arts; but also the whole province of Asia, as seen in the riotous demonstration of the silversmiths whose lucrative trade was imperiled by his preaching.

(6) Note that within these three years not only was a strong church established in Ephesus itself, but that other churches were planted in the surrounding country, probably by Paul's converts, as at Colosse, Laodicea, and Hieropolis (Col. 4: 13). It is possible that the other churches around Ephesus addressed in Rev., chs. 2, 3, may also date from this period.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL'S LAST VISIT TO THE GALATIAN CHURCHES.

§ 431. *Paul's Third Missionary Journey.* (1) *Objective Point.*—In St. Paul's third journey it seems clear that his original object was the province of Asia, and the visit to the churches of the Galatian country was a mere episode by the way. The aim which he had when he started on the second journey, and which he was forbidden by the Spirit when he reached Antioch to carry into effect, was realized in his third journey. . . .

(2) *Line of Travel.*—He came from Antioch of Syria through the Syrian and Cilician Gates; but the line of his route is not indicated until he reached districts which he had previously visited and where he had converts. He traversed this country ["the region of Galatia and Phrygia" (Acts 18: 23)], systematically visiting every place where there were disciples. . . . [and then], "having passed through the upper country, came to Ephesus,"—*i. e.*, he traversed the country from Cilicia to Ephesus, crossing the great central plateau, and descending to the sea again. He had a choice of two routes, one direct, passing through the churches which he visited on his first and second journeys, Derbe, Lystra, etc., and the other making an enormous circuit through Cappadocia and North Galatia, and omitting all the churches which are known to us by name. . . .

Why should the narrator, who in other cases describes St. Paul's route with accuracy, leave it entirely doubtful whether he took the northern or southern route? The reason is that the northern route never occurred to him as a possibility. The route from Syria by the Cilician Gates to the Aegean coast was a familiar and much frequented one; and unless another route was expressly mentioned, every one would understand that Paul passed through Lycaonia, and not through North Galatia.—*Ramsay: Church in Roman Empire*, pp. 90-92.

APOLLOS AT EPHEBUS AND AT CORINTH.

§ 432. *The City of Ephesus.* Ephesus was the greatest city of Asia Minor, and the metropolis of a province said to embrace no less than five hundred cities. It was situated on the Cayster, and built on the two mountains Prion and Coressus, and partly on the valley between them. It had a commodious harbor, and lay on the main road of traffic between the east and the west, a position favorable alike to inland and maritime commerce. It was a free city of the Roman Empire, and self-governed. It was full of elegant buildings; and its markets were supplied with the choicest products of all lands, and adorned with

works of art of every kind. . . . Its theatre was one of the largest ever erected, said to be capable of holding 30,000 persons. The city was the resort of all nations, and its population was numerous and multifarious. . . .

Ephesus was specially famous for two things—the worship of Diana and the practice of magic—and it was the headquarters of many defunct superstitions which owed their continuance to various orders of priests. The general character of the inhabitants was in very bad repute. . . . Nothing now remains of the magnificent metropolis of Asia but a miserable Turkish village. The once thronged harbor is now a malarious marsh. The ruins alone are grand. The vast theatre, may still be traced, but of the proud temple not one stone remains above another. — *Ormiston*: In Meyer's Commentary, Acts, p. 378. See also Ency. Brit., vol. viii, Art., "Ephesus."

§ 433. **Temple of Diana at Ephesus.** One building at Ephesus surpassed all the rest in magnificence and in fame. This was the Temple of Artemis or Diana, which glittered in brilliant beauty at the head of the harbour, and was reckoned by the ancients as one of the wonders of the world. . . . Leaving out of consideration the earliest temple, . . . we find the great edifice, which was anterior to the Macedonian period, . . . slowly continued even through the Peloponnesian war. . . . But the building . . . was not destined to remain long in the beauty of its perfection. The fanatic Herostratus set fire to it on the same night in which Alexander was born. . . . The temple was rebuilt with new and more sumptuous magnificence. . . . The Ephesians never ceased to embellish the shrine of their goddess, continually adding new decorations and subsidiary buildings, with statues and pictures by the most famous artists. . . .

It was plundered and laid waste by the Goths, who came from beyond the Danube in the reign of Gallienus. . . . Its remains are to be sought for in the mediæval buildings, in the columns of green jasper which support the dome of St. Sophia, or even in the naves of Italian cathedrals. . . . The Temple. . . was 425 feet in length and 220 in breadth, and the columns were 60 feet high. The number of columns was 127, each of them the gift of a king; and 36 of them were enriched with ornament and colour. . . . The value and fame of the Temple were enhanced by its being the treasury, in which a large portion of the wealth of Western Asia was stored up. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 73–76.

On Mr. J. T. Wood's explorations at Ephesus, and a full description of the temple, see *Malletson*: Acts and Epistles, pp. 386–390.

§ 434. **The Statue of Diana.** But, strangely enough, all this peerless beauty and gorgeous magnificence served but to enshrine a figure inelegant, nay, grotesque in the extreme. The traditional figure of the goddess was nothing more or less than an ugly wooden idol, not unlike in its character to those now worshipped in India. Coins and medals represent her as a tall figure, with a fine open countenance, with three rows of pendulous breasts before her, from which to the feet she is tightly encased in a kind of embossed and figured sheath, having the appearance of half a mummy case. She is crowned with a modius or corn measure; her arms and body are twined with flowers and fruits; figures of bulls and gryphons are creeping up her arms.



Image of
Diana.

Did the imaginative Greeks mean to represent by this monstrous figure the prolific powers of nature? and was it not a survival of the ancient pantheism and nature worship? . . . The "great goddess Diana of the Ephesians," however, was not the chaste Diana of Rome, nor the maiden Artemis of the Western Greeks, but the very

opposite, being an Eastern myth of genesis, a divinity of infinite fecundity, nourishing multitudinous forms of life, and is perhaps more to be identified with Astarte and other female divinities of the East. It is hardly possible for us to conceive the degradation of the worships of those mixed Greeks and Asiatic races. — *Malletson*: Acts and Epistles, pp. 391, 392.

§ 435. **Apollos of Alexandria; his Work.** Paul certainly reached Ephesus in the year 54, but in the mean time a new apostle had appeared on the scene. Apollos had come from Alexandria to Ephesus. It is said that he was a learned man and mighty in the Scriptures, which means that he was trained in the allegorical method of interpretation and was very skillful in it. . . . Now we learn that Apollos was engaged in preaching the gospel of Jesus. "He had been instructed in the way of the Lord," and he spoke and taught carefully and with great zeal the things concerning Jesus. . . . That can only mean that he was a Christian, and that like Paul he was a traveling missionary. But the strange thing is that he knew nothing about a form of Christian baptism. He practiced baptism to be sure, but it was the baptism of John, that is, a baptism as the symbol of repentance, and not in the name of Jesus. . . .

Apollos was further instructed by Aquila and Priscilla, and, as he desired to pass over to Europe, took letters of introduction to the Christians at Corinth. It would seem that after Paul's departure from Corinth the Jews had been having the best of it in the many disputations which they had with the Christians. For intercourse was not wholly broken off between the Christians and the Jews, but they undoubtedly continued their discussions and arguments. But they were no match for Apollos, who was trained in the Alexandrian school of logic, philosophy, and exegesis, and knew the Scriptures thoroughly and was master of all the arts which are so necessary to the debater. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 192-149.

DISCIPLES OF JOHN REBAPTIZED BY PAUL.

§ 436. **Paul and the Disciples of John.** Among others Paul here met with twelve disciples of John the Baptist. . . . There were those of his disciples who, following his directions, attained to a living faith in the Redeemer, and some of whom became apostles; others only attained a defective knowledge of the person and doctrine of Christ; others again, not imbibing the spirit of their master, held fast their former prejudices, and assumed a hostile attitude towards Christianity; probably the first germ of such an opposition appeared at this time and from it was formed the sect of the disciples of John, which continued to exist in a later age.

Those disciples of John whom Paul met at Ephesus, belonged to the second of these classes. . . . They had accepted the little they had heard of the person and doctrine of Jesus as the Messiah, to whom John pointed his followers, and considered themselves justified in professing to be Christians like others. Paul believed that he should find them such; but, on further conversation with them, it appeared that they understood nothing of the power of the glorified Saviour, and of the communication of divine life through him,—that they knew nothing of a Holy Spirit. Paul then imparted to them more accurate instruction on the relation between the ministry of John and that of Christ, between the baptism of John and the baptism which would initiate them into communion with Christ, and into a participation of the divine life that proceeded from him. After that, he baptized them in the name of Christ, with the usual consecration by the sign of the laying-on of hands and the accompanying prayer; and their reception into Christian fellowship was sealed by the usual manifestations of Christian inspiration. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, pp. 209-211.

TWO YEARS OF GREAT SUCCESS IN EPHEBUS.

§ 437. **Success and Persecution in Ephesus.** In Ephesus Paul again began with the Jews. Although there were Christians already there, yet they had not separated from the Jews, but were still attending the synagogue; they seem not to have had a separate place of worship. Paul continued this for three months, laboring to persuade the Jews of the Messiahship of Jesus, but at last the opposition was so great and violent that he had to withdraw from them. The school of Tyrannus was probably a building much like our "town halls," which was for rent and was used by the traveling philosophers, rhetoricians, teachers, and all such who wished to meet the public. Paul now rented this hall and made it the regular place of meeting for the Christians and the centre of his missionary work.

Here for three years * he continued to teach and preach the gospel, extending his influence through his disciples and helpers until, as it is said, "All them that dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks." In these few years he laid the foundation of the future greatness of the church in Asia Minor. All the west part of the country must have been evangelized. There were many cities there, and undoubtedly the beginning of their churches falls in this period. In the next century Asia Minor is the stronghold of Christianity; the heathen temples were deserted, the animals of sacrifice remained unsold, and it seemed that all the people were turned Christian. That such progress was possible was due to the labors of Paul and his companions, with Ephesus for their headquarters. . . .

These three years at Ephesus were the most difficult and distressing of all Paul's life. . . . His opponents were of three classes, the heathen, the Jews, and the Judaizers. We cannot follow them in all their machinations and violence, but . . . the many adversaries, the sentence of death that had been passed upon him, the trials with the plots of the Jews, the circumstances that required Aquila and Priscilla to risk their lives for him, and his fighting with wild beasts, — what more is required to show that these three years were full of dangers and trials that would have conquered many another heart, however brave. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 194, 195, 199, 201.

§ 438. **Paul and the Jewish Magicians.** [While in Ephesus Paul] wrought striking miracles, which were doubly necessary on account of the juggleries of pagan and Jewish magicians, for whom Ephesus was a great rendezvous. . . . There were at that time numbers of Jewish exorcists strolling about those parts, who pretended to be able to cast out devils by means of mysterious magical formulas and amulets, which they derived, as they boasted, from king Solomon. Some of the jugglers, the seven sons of one Sceva, . . . desired, like Simon Magus, to turn the semblance of Christianity to account for their selfish purposes, and fancied they were able, by simply calling on the name of Jesus, without sympathy with his Spirit, to produce the same effect as Paul. But the attempt failed. The demon, which they thus exorcised, knew the difference of spirits. The demoniac fell upon the impostors . . . and abused them so unmercifully, that they fled naked and wounded. This unexpected demonstration made such an impression, that many, who had formerly made use of the arts of magic, believed in Jesus; nay, even a number of the Goëtae burned their books of magic, which were especially abundant in Ephesus, and the value of which amounted to . . . eight thousand dollars. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, pp. 280, 281.

* This three years (Acts 20: 31) refers in round numbers to the whole period of Paul's work in Ephesus. His work in the "school of Tyrannus" continued but "two years" (Acts 19: 10).

DEMETRIUS AND THE SILVERSMITHS.

§ 439. Cause of the Riot: Speech of Demetrius. It was now about the month . . . of Artemis, when the annual festival of the goddess was observed throughout Greece and Asia, and a vast concourse of people from all quarters would be brought together. The preaching of the Apostle had by this time produced a great effect both in Ephesus and throughout proconsular Asia, and a great multitude had avowed themselves believers. Consequently the sellers of portable shrines of Diana found their trade sensibly diminished, and *no small tumult arose about the Way*. Prominent among the malcontents was a certain Demetrius, a master-manufacturer of those silver shrines, who found employment for a large body of workmen. These he now called together, and others similarly employed, and set forth the damage which their trade had sustained, and the danger lest the temple of the great goddess Diana, which not only Asia but all the civilized world held sacred, should fall into disrepute. His words found eager listeners, and an excited cry arose, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*.—*Maclear*: New Testament History, pp. 468, 469.

§ 440. The Town Clerk Dismisses the Assembly. The commotion . . . quickly spread, and the thousands of citizens and strangers, whom the games had attracted to Ephesus, made a general rush towards the theatre. Failing on their way in their attempt to seize St. Paul, they dragged thither two of his companions, Gaius and Aristarchus of Macedonia. . . . At length the Jews, not unwilling to injure the Apostle's cause, and anxious to clear themselves, put forward one Alexander, who may possibly have been *the coppersmith* mentioned in 2 Tim. 4: 14, and being connected in trade with Demetrius might have been expected to have some influence with the people. . . . But he was soon recognised as a Jew, and one unanimous cry which lasted upwards of two hours arose from the tumultuous throng, *Great is Diana of the Ephesians*.

When this had partially subsided, another effort was made to calm the storm. The Town-clerk, . . . who was the lawful president of the assembly, stood forward and reminded his hearers that the city of Ephesus was beyond all question the devoted "warden" of the great goddess Diana and the image that came down from the sky. The statements of a few unknown foreigners could not contradict a fact so patent to all the world. . . . If Demetrius and his friends had any just cause for complaint, it could be decided in the assize-courts, then open, or by an appeal to the proconsul, or, if necessary, in the regular assembly. . . . With these arguments the cautious man of authority tranquillized the assembly, and the crowd dispersed to their homes.—*Maclear*: New Testament History, pp. 469-471.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 441. Confirming the Disciples. Paul's practice of visiting as often as possible disciples already gained, in order that he might strengthen them in their faith, and encourage them in view of trials is an admirable example for all others who in any measure have the care of souls. The young converts, who in seasons of special interest are gathered into the church, need subsequent training as well as converting grace.

§ 442. The Importance of Great Cities. These are usually centers of enormous evil, but they may become centers of enormous good as well. The very magnitude of the evil is the strongest appeal for the gospel which alone has the power to subdue it. Moreover when the gospel is planted at such a center it becomes like seed carried in all directions by the currents of social intercourse and the winds of commerce.

§ 443. **Fidelity and Courage in the Face of Persecution and Death.** Paul's terrible experiences in Ephesus, even to the extent of literally fighting for his life with wild beasts in the arena, as some interpret 1 Cor. 15:32, or of contending with equally bloodthirsty enemies, as others take it, did not shake his purpose to stay there until his work was done. The consciousness of being where God has put us gives us immovable courage (*cf.* Jer. 1:17-19); the assurance of eternal glory beyond present sufferings gives strength and patience to bear all that enemies can here inflict upon us.

§ 444. **Persecution the Price of Moral Success.** That Paul's preaching aroused everywhere such malignant opposition was the best testimony to its effectiveness. The preacher who conciliates all classes and hurts the consciences of none may well tremble for the character of his work.

§ 445. **Selfishness in the Garb of Religious Zeal.** The Ephesian silver-smiths cared less for the fame of Diana than for the diminished profits of their trade. Their zeal for the former waxed as the latter waned. Any disturbance of the existing order of things in the religious world in favor of progress is always decried as heresy or sacrilege when it happens that the existing order is bound up with profitable business interests.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. JEWISH EXORCISTS: Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Exorcists." 2. HIGH PRIESTS AND ASIARCHS: HOW ELECTED: *Lewin*: Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. i, pp. 316-318. 3. THE MONTH ARTEMIS THE PROBABLE TIME OF THE RIOT: *Ibid.*, vol. i, pp. 405-409. 4. CONFIRMATORY EVIDENCE OF RECENT EXCAVATIONS: *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, pp. 197, 198. 5. THE NARRATIVE IN ACTS 19:23-41 EXAMINED IN THE LIGHT OF RECENTLY DISCOVERED INSCRIPTIONS: *Ramsay*, Church in the Roman Empire, pp. 112-147. 6. PAUL'S WORK OUTSIDE THE CITY OF EPHESUS: *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, p. 350, note.

Lesson 24.—TROUBLES IN THE CHURCH AT CORINTH. Paul's Warnings and Advice.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 446. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the Corinthian church, after Paul's departure and on the arrival of other teachers, broke up into a variety of factions; how other evils found their way into the church, and how Paul in writing to the church dealt with these evils and with certain other social questions that perplexed the Christians in Corinth.

§ 447. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson, get first of all a clear conception of the relative geographical positions of Ephesus where Paul was laboring, and of Corinth to which he wrote the epistle now under consideration; notice the commercial importance of both these cities, the constant and easy communication between them, and how natural it was that Paul should be kept informed of the condition of the church in Corinth either by report or by direct communications.

(2) Call attention to the fact that since Paul's departure from Corinth a great

variety of disturbances had arisen in the church; that the purity of its life had been corrupted by too close social intercourse with the surrounding heathen; that false conceptions of Christian liberty had resulted in gross and shameful abuses; that through the eagerness of many to display their gifts of utterance the public worship of the church had become filled with confusion, and that for the purpose of repressing these disturbances and of correcting these and other evils, Paul wrote the letter now known as I Corinthians.

(3) Note especially how Paul deals with the factions in the church by showing that there is no substantial reason for them; since while there are many ministers, the work they all do is really one, — a temple built on Christ as the foundation, into which enters a diversity of material, and on which men may labor foolishly or wisely, — and that the quality of every man's work will by and by be subjected to a searching test.

(4) Show how in a heathen community the question of eating meat offered to idols would naturally arise, and how easily sensitive consciences might be disturbed by it. In answering the question of the Corinthians concerning it, Paul, as usual, does not content himself with establishing a mere rule, but appeals to fundamental principles, which are as practically useful to us to-day as they were to those to whom he addressed them.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 448. **Genuineness of the First Epistle to the Corinthians.** The genuineness of this Epistle is undoubted. The witnesses for it stretch back into the remotest antiquity; and among the earliest are Polycarp, Ignatius, Clemens Romanus, Irenæus, Athenagoras, and Clemens Alexandrinus. . . . The internal characteristics also allow no uncertainty on the subject. The boldest criticism of our day . . . has suffered it to go unchallenged, and puts these two Epistles [1 and 2 Cor.] beside those to the Romans and the Galatians as the genuine writings of St. Paul. . . . But aside from and beyond all these evidences is the style and tone of the Epistle itself. Its every line is instinct with the spirit of Paul. All the features of his great and unique character are too sharply impressed upon it to allow of any hesitation as to the authorship. — *Kling*: In Lange's Commentary, I Corinthians, pp. 13, 14; see also *Beet*: Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 2-5.

§ 449. **Place and Time of Writing.** The place of writing it is pointed out in ch. 16: 8, to have been **EPHESUS**. A mistaken rendering of the words [in] verse 5, as if they signified 'for I am passing through Macedonia,' — led probably to the subscription in . . . our English Bibles. But the idea has never been seriously entertained. . . .

At the time of writing, the Apostle intended to quit Ephesus after Pentecost of that year. And on connecting this with Acts [chs.] 19, 20 it appears that he really did leave Ephesus about Pentecost in the year 57. . . . It is almost certain then that the Epistle was written *before Pentecost*, A.D. 57: and probable, that *somewhat about Easter* was the exact time. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, Prolegomena, pp. 54, 55.

§ 450. **Occasion of the Epistle.** The Occasion of the Epistle would seem to have been threefold. (a) Members of the household of Chloe had brought reports of the factions and other evils. . . . (b) Independently of her household, St. Paul seems to have heard of the monstrous case of incest. . . . This is the chief occasion of the letter: for Timothy had already been sent to deal with the factions. From one or both of these sources Paul had also heard of litigation before heathen judges, disputes in public worship and even as to the Eucharist, and erroneous doctrines touching the Resurrection. Besides this (c) the Corinthians themselves had written to consult the Apostle. This letter seems to have been self-satisfied in tone, containing no confession of the existing scandals. — *Plummer*: In *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Corinthians, First Epistle to the," p. 652b.

§ 451. **Historical Value of the Epistle.** The letter . . . is addressed, not only to this metropolitan Church, but also to the Christian communities established in other places in the same province. . . . By it we are introduced, as it were, behind the scenes of the Apostolic Church, and its minutest features are revealed to us under the light of daily life. We see the picture of a Christian congregation as it met for worship in some upper chamber, such as the house of Aquila, or of Gaius, could furnish. We see that these seasons of pure devotion were not unalloyed by human vanity and excitement; yet, on the other hand, we behold the heathen auditor pierced to the heart by the inspired eloquence of the Christian prophets, the secrets of his conscience laid bare to him, and himself constrained to fall down on his face and worship God; . . . we see the administration of the Holy Communion terminating the feast of love.

Again we become familiar with the perplexities of domestic life, the corrupting proximity of heathen immorality, the lingering superstition, the rash speculation, the lawless perversion of Christian liberty; we witness the strife of theological factions, the party names, the sectarian animosities. We perceive the difficulty of the task imposed upon the Apostle, who must guard from so many perils, and guide through so many difficulties, his children in the faith, whom else he had begotten in vain; and we learn to appreciate more fully the magnitude of that laborious responsibility under which he describes himself as almost ready to sink, "the care of all the Churches." — *Conybeare and Howson*: *St. Paul*, vol. ii, pp. 31, 32.

THE FACTIONS IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH.

§ 452. **Party Spirit in the Church at Corinth.** The Church [at Corinth] . . . combined two distinct elements, Jews or proselytes and Gentiles, of whom the latter were the most numerous. The natural jealousy between these two bodies, repressed during the Apostle's presence, had burst out on his departure, and divided the Church into various parties. Some affected fidelity solely and exclusively to St. Paul himself; others, probably the Jewish section, to Peter and *the brethren of the Lord*; a third, fascinated by the eloquence and learning of the Alexandrian Apollos, had attached themselves to him, and probably "hung halfway between the extreme Jewish and the extreme Gentile party;" while a fourth abjured all devotion to any human teachers, and styled themselves the "Christ" party. — *Maclear*: *New Testament History*, p. 466.

For article on ancient Corinth and her people, see § 377, Lesson 20.

§ 453. **Other Evils in the Corinthian Church.** In addition to these evils the Gentile faction pushed their views of Christian freedom beyond all due bounds. The profligacy that disgraced the inhabitants of Corinth and made their name a byword was openly avowed and gloried in. To such a pitch, moreover, did they carry their disputes that lawsuits were brought into Roman and Greek

courts of Justice, and instead of shrinking from the contaminating influence of sensuality at the sacrificial feasts, they freely frequented them even in the colonnades of the temples: the women threw off the head-dress which the customs of Greece and of the East required; the most solemn ordinance of the Church was profaned by disorderly and reckless festivity; the most showy "gifts" were designed to the disparagement of those which tended only to instruct and improve; mixed marriages were freely contracted; and the doctrine of the Resurrection was either denied or emptied of all meaning. — *Maclear*: New Testament History, pp. 466, 467.

MANY MINISTERS, ONE WORK.

§ 454. **Christ the Head of the Church.** Paul condemned in an equal degree all party feeling in the Corinthian Church. . . . He taught them that Christ was their sole Head, to whom they must all adhere; that human laborers were to be considered only as instruments, by whom God worked according to their peculiar adaptabilities, in order to promote in the hearts of their fellow-men that result which all things were appointed to serve. They ought to be far from venturing to boast that they had this or that man for a teacher; for such boasting, by which they owned themselves dependent on man, was rather a denial of their being Christians. . . . Those sublime expressions in 1 Cor. 3: 21 show how the truest spiritual freedom and the highest elevation of soul are the offspring of Christian humility. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, p. 243.

§ 455. **Christ the One Foundation.** To those persons who could not find in his simple preaching the wisdom which they sought after, and preferred Apollos as a teacher more according to their Grecian taste, he said that it was wrong on their part to regret the absence of such wisdom in his preaching, for the fountain of all genuine wisdom, the wisdom of God, was not to be found in any scheme of philosophy, but only in the doctrine of the crucified Jesus, the Saviour of the world, which he had made the central point of his preaching; but this divine wisdom could only be found and understood by a disposition that was susceptible of what was divine. . . . The building on this or on another foundation constituted the difference, in Paul's judgment, between the true and the false teachers of Christianity. — *Neander*: Planting and Training, pp. 243, 244.

§ 456. **Different Materials Used by Different Builders.** When Corinth rose from its ruins, [it was destroyed by the Romans 146 B.C. and lay in ruins more than a century] it was no uncommon sight to see a miserable hovel reared against the marble wall of a temple or the splendid portico of some deserted palace rendered habitable by a patchwork of mud and straw. . . . And the picture in Paul's mind's eye of the Corinthian Church vividly suggested what he had seen while walking among those heterogeneous buildings. He sees the Church rising with a strange mixture of design and material. The foundation, he knows, is the same; but on the solid marble is reared a crazy structure of second-hand and ill-adapted material, here a wall propped up with rotten planking, there a hole stopped with straw, on one side a richly decorated gateway, with gold and silver profusely wrought into its design, on the other side a clay partition or loose boarding. It grieves him to see the incongruous structure. He sees the teachers bringing, with great appearance of diligence, the merest rubbish, wood, hay, stubble, apparently unconscious of the incongruity of their material with the foundation they build upon. He sees them taken with every passing fancy — the lifeless stubble that has lost its living seed of truth, the mud of the common highway, the readiest thoughts that come to hand — and setting these in the temple wall. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 87, 88.

§ 457. **The Work Tested by Fire.** The soundness of the material which has been built upon the foundation of Christ will, like all things else, be tested. "The day shall declare it;" that light of Christ's presence and dominance over all things, that light which shall penetrate all human things when our true life is entered on — *that* shall declare it. . . . The Corinthians knew what a trial by fire meant. They knew how the flames had travelled over their own city, consuming all that fire could kindle on, and leaving of the slightly built houses nothing but a charred and useless timber here and there, while the massive marbles stood erect among the ruins; and the precious metals, even though molten, were prized by the conqueror. Against the fire no prayer, no appeal, prevailed. Its judgment and decisions were irreversible; wood, hay, stubble, disappeared: only what was solid and valuable remained. By such irreversible judgment are we and our work to be judged. We are to enter into a life in which the nature and character of the work we have done in this world shall bring upon it utter destruction or a rewarding and growing utility. Fire simply burns up all that will burn and leaves what will not. . . . The work that has been well and wisely done will stand; foolish, vain, and selfish work will go. We are to pass through the fire. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 89, 90.

§ 458. **A Man's Work Consumed, yet he himself Saved.** Paul, with his unflinching discernment, accepts it as a very possible contingency that a Christian may do poor work. In that case, Paul says, the man will be saved as by fire; his work shall be burned, but himself be scatheless. He shall be in the position of a man whose house has been burnt; the man is saved, but his property, all that he has slowly gathered round him and valued as the fruit of his labour, is gone. He may have received no bodily injury, but he is so stripped that he scarcely knows himself, and the whole thought and toil of his life seem to have gone for nothing. So, says Paul, shall this and that man pass into the heavenly state, hearing behind him as he barely enters the crash of all he has been building up as it falls and leaves for the result of a laborious life a ghastly, charred ruin and a cloud of dust. To have been useless, to have advanced Christ's kingdom not at all, to have spent our life building up a pretentious erection which at last falls about our ears, to come to the end and find that not one solid brick in the whole fabric is of our laying, and that the world would have been quite as well without us — this must be humiliating indeed; but it is a humiliation which all selfish, worldly, and foolishly fussy Christians are preparing for themselves. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 90, 91

CONCERNING THINGS SACRIFICED TO IDOLS.

§ 459. **Idol Sacrifices.** The next question which had been put to Paul by the Corinthian Church, and to which he now replies, is "touching things offered unto idols," whether a Christian had liberty to eat such things or not. This question necessarily arose in a society partly heathen and partly Christian. Every meal was in a manner dedicated to the household gods by laying some portion of it on the family altar. Where one member of a heathen family had become a Christian, he would at once be confronted with the question, rising in his own conscience, whether by partaking of such food he might not be countenancing idolatry. On the occasion of a birthday, or a marriage, or a safe return from sea, or any circumstance that seemed to call for celebration, it was customary to sacrifice in some public temple. And after the legs of the victim, enclosed in fat, and the entrails had been burnt on the altar, the worshipper received the remainder, and invited his friends and guests to partake of it either in the temple itself, or in the surrounding grove, or at his own home. Here again a young convert might

very naturally ask himself whether he was justified in attending such a feast and actually sitting down to meat in the idol's presence.

Nor was it only personal friendships and the harmony of family life that were threatened; but on public occasions and national celebrations the Christian was in a strait betwixt two; fearful, on the one hand, of branding himself as no good citizen by abstaining from participation in the feast, fearful, on the other hand, lest by compliance he should be found unfaithful to his new religion. And even though his own family was entirely Christian, the difficulty was not removed, for much of the meat offered in worship found its way into the common market, so that at every meal the Christian ran the risk of eating things sacrificed to idols. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 179, 180.

§ 460. **Eating Meat Offered to Idols a Cause of Corruption in the Corinthian Church.** The main reason why Church-life at Corinth could not attain a healthy development manifestly lay in the fact that the young Gentile Christians neither could nor would give up close social intercourse with their unbelieving countrymen. Afterwards, as before, they received invitations from them to feasts, and did not even scruple to take part in the sacrificial feasts of the heathen, where they were certain to meet with renewed temptation to wantonness and lust. . . . Owing to this close intercourse with their heathen fellow-countrymen, the views of morality prevalent with the latter and the universal corruption of morals in which they were involved could not fail to exercise a contaminating influence on the Church. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. i, pp. 252, 253.

§ 461. **Eating such Meat Lawful, but not expedient.** Paul says in answer: Of course you know that these idols are nothing; there is but one God, who has made, controls, and knows all things. You know that eating of itself has nothing to do with religion; you can neither please nor displease God thereby. It is perfectly proper to accept such an invitation, for you would eat of this flesh as coming from God's hand; you would eat it to his glory. But some one who does not have this knowledge may see you seated in a heathen temple taking part in one of these temple meals. He would regard this as a sin, and would be offended at it; or he might think that he might do the same thing, and so would take part in such a meal as if it were really a sacrifice to another god, and thus bring upon himself the guilt of idolatry. So that, although you have a right to take part in such meals, yet if you thereby wound the weak conscience of a brother, or lead him to fall into sin, you should deny yourselves of the privilege. If need be, you should abstain wholly from such meals. . . .

[In chap. 10] Paul repeats what he has said in the eighth chapter: these things are lawful, each one has the abstract right to practice them, but there is a higher power that may forbid it. Each one is bound to build up, to strengthen, his fellow-Christians. He must do nothing which will cause another to stumble. Therefore if you are invited to a feast, and choose to accept, go and eat what is set before you without asking any questions. . . . But if some Christian brother with a weak conscience tells you that this flesh has been offered to idols, you must abstain from eating, lest you wound his conscience and lead him into sin. For in all things we must imitate Christ, who sought not his own pleasure, but came to serve. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 226, 227.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 462. **One in Christ.** Over against the wrangling of the numerous factions in the church at Corinth, comes the sweet voice of the head of the church, who in his prayer to the Father, said, "That they may all be one, even as we are one,"

The church universal and triumphant will bear but one standard—Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world.

§ 463. **What the Church has Lost through Factions.** “The church was intended to be the grand uniter of the race. Within its pale all kinds of men were to be gathered. Distinctions were to be obliterated; differences were to be forgotten; the deepest thoughts and interests of all men were to be recognised as common; there was to be neither Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor barbarian, bond nor free. But instead of uniting men otherwise alienated, the Church has alienated neighbours and friends; and men who will do business together, who will dine together, will not worship together. Thus the Church has lost a large part of her strength. Had the kingdom of Christ been visibly one, it would have been supreme and without a rival in the world.”—*Dods*.

§ 464. **The Increase from God.** As each member of the body is needful for the welfare of the whole, and as the whole is impotent without the life that animates it; so while all members in the church are useful, those who have the smallest talents as well as those who have the largest, yet the whole church is dead and powerless for good unless God fills it with his life and works in it and through it for his own glory.

§ 465. **Building on the One Foundation.** For a spiritual structure there is only one foundation—Christ Jesus. He that builds on this will be saved even though his poor superstructure is entirely swept away. He who builds on any other foundation, no matter how apparently solid and spacious his superstructure may be, will perish with all his work.

§ 466. **Things Lawful not always Expedient.** Paul taught that eating meat offered to idols was lawful to those Christians in Corinth who saw no harm in it for themselves. But he also enjoined such persons not to eat it lest they lead others into sin. The same principle lies at the foundation of total abstinence from intoxicating liquors to-day.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. LOST EPISTLES: *Meyer*, Commentary, Corinthians, p. 125. 2. PAUL AND THE CHURCH AT CORINTH: *Beet*, Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 17–20. 3. CONDITION OF THE CHURCH AT CORINTH: *Farrar*, Life of St. Paul, ch. 32. 4. THE FOUR EPISTLES IN THE CORINTHIAN CHURCH: *Lange*, Commentary, 1 Corinthians, pp. 8, 9. 5. GOING TO LAW BEFORE UNBELIEVERS: *Meyer*, Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 145, 146. 6. WOMEN SPEAKING IN PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES UNVEILED: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, pp. 243–257. 7. EQUALITY OF SEX AS ADVOCATED BY ST. PAUL: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. ii, p. 564. 8. ABUSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, pp. 261–272. 9. SPIRITUAL GIFTS: *Ibid.*, ch. 18. 10. SPEAKING WITH TONGUES: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 197–203. 11. THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, pp. 327–369. 12. THE SPIRITUAL BODY: *Ibid.*, pp. 373–386.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 25.—SPIRITUAL GIFTS IN THE EARLY CHURCH.—
Eagerness for Miraculous Gifts Rebuked, and the Value
of Love Exalted.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 467. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the nature of the miraculous gifts bestowed upon the early Christians, and the strife and disturbance caused in the Corinthian church by the mania to possess and exercise the gift of tongues. Also to show how Paul rebuked this inordinate desire, and pointed out the utility of the gift of prophecy in comparison with the gift of tongues and the superiority of love to all gifts.

§ 468. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Read attentively the twelfth chapter in 1 Corinthians for the purpose of learning what the various gifts were which the Holy Spirit had distributed in the church; then study the special characteristics of the gifts of prophecy and of tongues as they are contrasted in chapter fourteen.

(2) Read again the account of the gift of tongues on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2: 1-13), and compare its manifestation at that time with its later manifestation in Corinth.

(3) Call attention to the spirit that prevailed in the Corinthian church to use these gifts, not so much for the edification of the church as for personal vain-glory and display, and how the more showy of these gifts were eagerly obtruded, for the purpose evidently of creating a feeling of envy in those who did not possess them.

(4) Note how Paul not only rebuked this selfish spirit and the disorders introduced by it into the public assemblies, but laid down a principle by which the value of any spiritual gift might be tested, namely, that of usefulness in building up the church. Tested by this standard, the gift of prophecy—speaking for God and in behalf of him to the conversion and edification of men—was immeasurably greater than that of tongues.

(5) But, in conclusion, observe that love transcends all gifts in value and permanency; indeed, that without it all gifts are worthless; and that its possession and exercise are not limited to a favored few, but should be the happy and ennobling possession of everyone.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

DIVERSITY OF GIFTS.

§ 469. **Source and Object of All Gifts.** [The] gifts, were different; the . . . channels of their working, were different; the . . . effects of them were different; but the source of them was One—one Holy Ghost, from whom they are all derived; one Lord, by whom all true ministries of them are authorised . . . [and these] diverse manifestations of one Spirit, . . . were all subordinated to one sole end—edification. And, therefore, to indulge in any conflict between gifts, any rivalry in their display, was to rend asunder the unity which reigned supreme through this rich multiplicity; to throw doubt on the unity of their origin, to ruin the unity of their action.—*Farrar* : St. Paul, p. 395.

§ 470. **The Principle of "Discernment of Spirits:"** The Truth of so-called Spiritual Utterances Tested by their Attitude toward Jesus. Some, we gather—either because they had given the reins to the most uncontrollable excitement, and were therefore the impotent victims of any blasphemous thought which happened for the moment to sweep across the troubled horizon of their souls; or from some darkening philosophical confusion . . . ; or perhaps again from some yet unsolved Jewish difficulty about the verse "Cursed is he that hangeth on a tree;"—amid their unintelligible utterances, had been heard to exclaim, *Anathema Iesus*, "Jesus is accursed;" and, having as yet very vague notions as to the true nature of the "gift of tongues," the Corinthians had asked Paul in great perplexity what they were to think of this?

His direct answer is emphatic. When they were the ignorant worshippers of dumb idols they may have been accustomed to the false inspiration of the Pythia, or the Sibyl—the possessing mastery by a spiritual influence which expressed itself in the broken utterance, and streaming hair, and foaming lip, and which they might take to be the spirit of Python, or Trophonius, or Dis. But now he lays down the great principles of that "discernment of spirits," which should enable them to distinguish the rapt utterance of divine emotion from the mechanical and self-induced frenzy of feminine feebleness or hypocritical superstition. Whatever might be the external phenomena, the utterances of the Spirit were one in import. No man truly inspired by him could say, "Anathema is Jesus;" or uninspired by Him could say from the heart, "Jesus is the Lord."—*Farrar* : St. Paul, p. 395.

§ 471. **Many Members; One Body.** Illustrating the relation of Christians to one another by the figure of the members of a body, Paul suggests several ideas.

1. The unity of Christians is a vital unity. The members of the body of Christ form one whole because they partake of one common life. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." . . .

2. Paul is careful to show that the very efficiency of the body depends upon the multiplicity and variety of the members of which it is composed: "If they were all one member, where were the body?" "If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling?" The lowest forms of life have either no distinct organs or very few; but the higher we ascend in the scale of life the more numerous and more distinctly differentiated are the organs. . . . The same law necessarily holds true of the body of Christ. It is highly organized, and no one organ can do the whole work of the body. . . . The more nearly this body approaches perfection, the more various and distinct will these gifts be . . .

3. As there is to be no slothful self-disparagement in the body of Christ, so must there be no depreciation of other people. "The eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee: nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." . . .

4. Lastly, Paul is careful to teach that "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man *to profit withal*." It is not for the glorification of the individual that the new spiritual life manifests itself in this or that remarkable form, but for the edification of the body of Christ. — *Dods*: I Corinthians, pp. 284-287, 289, 290.

LOVE GREATER THAN ALL GIFTS.

§ 472. **Paul's Eulogy of Love.** The surpassing beauty of this chapter has been felt and expressed wherever it has been read, by persons of the most opposite religious views, and by those who can appreciate only its literary qualities. In the chapters that go before there is eloquence too, but of a different kind — keen, impassioned, vehement; the next chapter but one also rises to the height of sublimity; but here all is serene. The opening verses are a grand introduction to what follows, sweeping away as worthless the very best things which want the cardinal principle of love. This is then defined by no fewer than fifteen characteristics, eight negative and seven positive. The terse precision and wonderful completeness of these strike every discerning reader; while the periods roll on in rhythmic melody to the end of the chapter, like a strain of richest music dying away, or a golden sunset; and everything is seen out but Love, which is found standing alone as the enduring life of heaven. — *Brown*: In Meyer's Commentary, Corinthians, p. 310.

§ 473. **Love Contrasted, Analyzed, Defended.** [The 13th chapter of I Corinthians takes us] to Christianity at its source; and there we have seen, "The greatest of these is love." It is not an oversight. Paul was speaking of faith just a moment before. . . . So far from forgetting he deliberately contrasts them, "Now abideth Faith, Hope, Love," and without a moment's hesitation the decision falls, "The greatest of these is Love." . . .

In this noble eulogy he has given us the most wonderful and original account extant of the *summum bonum*. We may divide it into three parts. In the beginning of the short chapter, we have Love *contrasted*; in the heart of it, we have Love *analyzed*; toward the end, we have Love *defended* as the supreme gift.

Paul begins by contrasting Love with other things that men in those days thought much of. I shall not attempt to go over those things in detail. Their inferiority is already obvious. He contrasts it with eloquence. And what a noble gift it is. . . . [Yet] Paul says, "If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not love, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." . . . He contrasts it with prophecy. He contrasts it with mysteries. He contrasts it with faith. He contrasts it with charity. . . . Then Paul contrasts it with sacrifice and martyrdom. . . .

After contrasting Love with these things, Paul, in three verses, very short, gives us an amazing analysis of what this supreme thing is. I ask you to look at it. It is a compound thing, he tells us. It is like light. . . . The Spectrum of Love has nine ingredients: . . . Patience; kindness; generosity; humility; courtesy; unselfishness; good temper; guilelessness; sincerity — these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man. . . .

Now I have a closing sentence or two to add about Paul's reason for singling out love as the supreme possession. It is a very remarkable reason. In a single word it is this: *it lasts*. "Love," urges Paul, "never faileth." Then he begins again one of his marvellous lists of the great things of the day, and exposes them

one by one. He runs over the things that men thought were going to last, and shows that they are all fleeting, temporary, passing away. . . . The immortal soul must give itself to something that is immortal. And the only immortal things are these: "Now abideth faith, hope, love, but the greatest of these is love."—*Drummond*: Addresses, pp. 16, 20–24, 26–28, 59, 66.

§ 474. **Love is the Greatest.** Faith is the root of love. It is the believing apprehension of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, that calls forth love to Him. . . . We are said to be sanctified, to be made the children of God, to overcome the world, to be saved by faith. Christ dwells in our hearts by faith; he that believes hath eternal life, *i.e.* faith as including knowledge is eternal life. There are no higher effects than these, so far as we are concerned. Others say that love is superior to faith and hope, because the latter belong to the present state only, and love is to continue for ever. But, according to the true explanation of the verse, all these graces are declared to abide.

The true explanation is to be found in the use which Paul makes of this word *greater*, or the equivalent term *better*. In 12: 31, he exhorts his readers to seek the *better* gifts, *i.e.* the more useful ones. And in 14: 5 he says, 'Greater is he, that prophesies, than he that speaks with tongues'; *i.e.* he is more useful.

"Throughout that chapter [14] the ground of preference of one gift to others is made to consist in its superior usefulness. This is Paul's standard; and judged by this rule, love is greater than either faith or hope. Faith saves ourselves, but love benefits others." *Hodge*: In Meyer's Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 310, 311.

§ 475. **Infinite Possibilities of Love.** Love transcends all other gifts. It never ceases. In the future world the other gifts will disappear, at least in their present nature. The mysterious tongues will cease in the land, where all understand them. Prophecies will be lost in their fulfillment, like the aurora in the noon. Knowledge, which on earth is but partial, will merge in immediate, perfect intuition. Nay, faith itself will be exchanged for sight, and hope for fruition. But love, by which even here we have fellowship of life with God through Christ, remains love. It changes not. It rises not out of its element. It passes not into another sphere. It only deepens and expands. It can never gain higher ground, never reach another and better form of union with God; but only continues to grow stronger, fuller, more lively, and more blissful.—*Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 484.

§ 476. **Writers on Love Compared.** It is possible, though unlikely, that Paul may have read the eulogium pronounced on love by the greatest of Greek writers five hundred years before: "Love is our lord, supplying kindness and banishing unkindness, giving friendship and forgiving enmity, the joy of the good, the wonder of the wise, the amazement of the gods; desired by those who have no part in him, and precious to those who have the better part in him; parent of delicacy, luxury, desire, fondness, softness, grace; careful of the good, uncaring of the evil. In every word, work, wish, fear—pilot, helper, defender, saviour; glory of gods and men, leader best and brightest; in whose footsteps let every man follow, chanting a hymn and joining in that fair strain with which love charms the souls of gods and men."

Five hundred years after Paul another eulogium was pronounced on love by Mohammed: "Every good act is charity: your smiling in your brother's face; your putting a wanderer in the right road; your giving water to the thirsty, or exhortations to others to do right. A man's true wealth hereafter is the good he has done in this world to his fellow-man. When he dies, people will ask, What property has he left behind him? but the angels will ask what good deeds he has sent before him."

Paul's eulogium is the more effective because it exhibits in detail the various ramifications of this exuberant and fruitful grace, how it runs out into all our intercourse with our fellow-men and carries with it a healing and sweetening virtue. It imbues the entire character, and contains in itself the motive of all Christian conduct. It is "the fulfilling of the Law." Its claims are paramount because it embraces all other virtues. If a man has love, there is no grace impossible to him or into which love will not on occasion develop. Love becomes courage of the most absolute kind where danger threatens its object. It begets wisdom and a skill which put to shame technical training and experience. It brings forth self-restraint and temperance as its natural fruit; it is patient, forgiving, modest, humble, sympathizing. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 299, 300.

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY BETTER THAN THE GIFT OF TONGUES.

§ 477. **The Gift of Prophecy.** With prophecy indeed there is no great difficulty. Prophesying is speaking for God, whether the utterance regards present or future matters. . . . Prediction is not necessarily any part of the prophet's function. It may be so, and often it was so, but a man might be a prophet who had no revelation of the future. In the sense in which Paul uses the word, a prophet was "an inspired teacher and exhorter who revealed to men the secrets of God's will and word and the secrets of their own hearts for the purpose of conversion and edification." . . . The gift of prophecy, then, was the endowment which enabled a Christian to speak so as to bring the mind and spirit of the hearer into touch with God. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 313, 314.

§ 478. **The Gift of Tongues.** The gift of tongues is involved in greater obscurity. On its first occurrence, as recorded in the book of Acts, it would seem to have been the gift of speaking in foreign languages . . . , "every man hearing," as it is said, "his own language, the tongue wherein he was born." It would certainly seem probable, therefore, that, whether the gift afterwards changed its character or not, it was originally the power of speaking in a foreign language so as to be intelligible to any one who understood that language. This gift was of course communicated, not as a permanent acquisition, to fit men to preach the Gospel in foreign countries, but merely as a temporary impulse to utter words which to themselves had no meaning. All spiritual gifts seem to have been inconstant in their influence. . . . This "gift of tongues" was only available "as the Spirit gave utterance" to each, and failed to communicate a constant and complete command of the language. . . .

If then this gift was intermittent and did not qualify its possessor to use a foreign language for the ordinary purposes of life or for preaching the Gospel, what was its use? It served the same purpose as other miracles; it made visible and called attention to the entrance of new powers into human nature. As Paul says, it was "for them that believe not, not for them that believe." It was meant to excite inquiry, not to instruct the mind of the Christian. . . .

It must, however, be said that the common opinion of scholars is that the gift of tongues did not consist in ability to speak a foreign language even temporarily, but in an exalted frame of mind which found expression in sounds or words belonging to no human language. — *Dods*: 1 Corinthians, pp. 314–316; see also Library Extracts, Lesson 2, § 32.

§ 479. **Comparative Value of these Gifts.** Wherefore, brethren, covet to prophesy, and forbid not to speak with tongues. And here again the old preference for prophecy is expressed. This gift is to be decidedly preferred and sought for, the other is only not to be hindered. "We recognize here an advance in the development of thought. At the start Paul said: 'covet earnestly spiritual gifts,'

and planting himself on the stand-point of the Corinthians, he had included among these the gift of tongues. But after having explained how prophecy subserved the welfare of the church far more, he here gives this preference and only expresses the wish that no obstacle be put in the way of the other." — *Schaff*: In Lange's Commentary, 1 Corinthians, p. 299a.

§ 480. **Paul's Instruction against Disorder in Public Worship.** The disorders . . . in the Corinthian Church had sprung from the selfish struggle of each to show off his own special gift, whether tongue, or psalm, or teaching, or revelation. If they would bear in mind that edification was the object of worship, such scenes would not occur. Only a few at a time, therefore, were to speak with tongues, and only in case some one could interpret, otherwise they were to suppress the impulse. Nor were two people ever to be preaching at the same time. If the rivalry of unmeaning sounds among the glossolalists had been fostered by some Syrian enthusiast, the less intolerable but still highly objectionable disorder of rival preachers absorbed in the "egotism of oratory" was an abuse introduced by the admirers of Apollos. In order to remedy this he lays down the rule that if one preacher was speaking, and another felt irresistibly impelled to say something, the first was to cease. It was idle to plead that they could not control themselves. The spirits which inspire the true prophet are under the prophet's due control, and God is the author, not of confusion but of peace. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 397.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 481. **Object of Spiritual Gifts.** God gives us talents, not so much for our personal pleasure, as for his own glory, and the upbuilding of his kingdom in the earth.

§ 482. **The Gift of Tongues.** The gift of tongues was intended as a miraculous witness to the power of God, unto the unbelieving. The mysterious and showy nature of the gift made it the most sought after in Corinth, and the exercise of it in the church brought little else than confusion. We need to seek and cultivate those special gifts which are most needed for the development of an "all-around" Christian character.

§ 483. **Religious Services not to be Conducted in an Unknown Tongue.** Paul's condemnation of the gift of tongues as useless unless it be interpreted condemns by implication the use in modern religious services of a foreign language which the common people cannot understand. It violates the precept, "Let all things be done unto edifying," for utterances that are not understood are at best only like a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

§ 484. **Faith, Hope and Charity.** The three graces of mythology were beautiful in form; the three Christian graces are beauties of character. Greek art and life led to the worship of an evanescent beauty; Christianity seeks the culture of the soul, and therefore idealizes those attributes of character which contribute to a man's immortal welfare.

§ 485. **Relation of Love and Christianity.** Our lack of love is the measure of our lack of Christianity. If we would have this gift, it must be cultivated by an earnest striving commensurate with our reward. Without it, all other gifts, sacrifices and efforts are vain.

§ 486. **Love, the Essential Thing.** If the spirit of love animates a man's life, he cannot but find favor with God and man. It both cultivates and refines,

and will do much to insure success in life. It is not so much what a man does, as the spirit in which he does it that makes the difference both here and hereafter.

§ 487. **Daily Life, the Test of Character.** Not in great deeds do we show our character, but in the daily actions of life. The best monument of a good man's life is the life itself, filled as it should be with "the little unremembered acts of kindness and of love."

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, ch. 18; *Schaff*, Apostolic Church, pp. 469-474. 2. SPEAKING WITH TONGUES: *Meyer*, Commentary, Corinthians, p. 298; *Schaff*, Apostolic Church, pp. 474-480; *Beet*, Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 259-262; *Lange*, Commentary, 1 Corinthians, pp. 299-301a. 3. GIFTS OF KNOWLEDGE AND OF WILL: *Schaff*, Apostolic Church, pp. 480-483; *Meyer*, Commentary, Corinthians, p. 298. 4. NO GIFT LIKE LOVE: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, ch. 19; *Schaff*, Apostolic Church, pp. 483, 484; *Beet*, Commentary, Corinthians, pp. 233-235; *Lange*, Commentary, 1 Corinthians, pp. 266-274. 5. SPIRITUAL GIFTS AND PUBLIC WORSHIP: *Dods*, 1 Corinthians, ch. 20. 6. ON WOMEN SPEAKING IN MEETING: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. ii, Corinthians, p. 600; *Lange*, Commentary, 1 Corinthians, pp. 302b, 303a.

Lesson 26.—PAUL'S SECOND TOUR IN GREECE. The Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 488. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Paul after completing his three years' ministry in Ephesus continued his third missionary journey northward into Macedonia, westward to Illyricum, southward into Greece where he spent three months, the greater part at Corinth, and thence to Troas on his way back to Jerusalem; how on meeting Titus in Macedonia he wrote the second epistle to the Corinthians; and how from Corinth he wrote the epistle to the Romans, because he must return to Jerusalem with the great collection and could not visit Rome at once.

§ 489. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note in studying this lesson the excessive brevity of Luke's narrative, due probably to the fact that he was not with Paul during this time; note, however, that what is lacking in the book of Acts can be supplied in large measure from Paul's own epistles written about this time.

(2) Picture Paul's distress of mind until in Macedonia he met Titus with joyful news from Corinth touching the salutary effect of his previous letter, and with painful news of such virulent attacks on himself by a small faction in the church that he was forced to write another letter in self defense.

(3) By means of the narrative in the Acts and of the scattered information in the epistles follow Paul's course from Macedonia until his return to Troas; note how he was surrounded by conflicts and perils, and how the Lord delivered him from them all and permitted him to continue his work.

(4) Mark how at this time he devoted himself with especial fervor to the task of completing the great fund from the Gentile churches which was to be carried up to Jerusalem; how he was influenced in this matter by his great desire to heal, as far as possible, the breach between the Gentile and the Jewish portions of the church, and how scrupulously he guarded himself against any imputation of self-interest in connection with this money.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL'S SECOND TOUR IN GREECE, AND HIS ANXIETIES ON THE WAY.

§ 490. **Brevity of Luke's Narrative.** The period of St. Paul's career at which we have now arrived was full of life, vigour, activity. He was in the very height of his powers, was surrounded with responsibilities, was pressed with cares and anxieties; and yet the character of the sacred narrative is very peculiar. From the passover of the year 57, soon after which the Apostle had to leave Ephesus, till the passover of the next year, we learn but very little of St. Paul's work from the narrative of St. Luke. The five verses with which the twentieth chapter begins tell us all that St. Luke apparently knew about the Apostle's actions during that time. . . . St. Luke, in fact, was so much taken up with his own duties at Philippi, where he had [probably] been labouring for the previous five years, that he had no time to think of what was going on elsewhere. . . . We may take this passage at which we have now arrived as an illustration of his methods of writing sacred history. This period of ten months, from the time St. Paul left Ephesus till he returned to Philippi at the following Easter season, was filled with most important labours which have borne fruit unto all ages of the Church, yet St. Luke dismisses them in a few words. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 385-387.

§ 491. **Harmony of the Acts with the Epistles.** On a late visit to the British Museum, the author could not but greatly admire the consummate ingenuity displayed in uniting together, each in its proper place, the numerous scattered and disjointed fragments of statues and of long inscriptions. . . . In the present, as in many other portions of this work, we are forcibly reminded of some such illustration as the above. We have to frame and fit together fragments from sundry Epistles, written about the same time by two authors, and relating to the same course of events. If we can adjust them to each other, so as to form a harmonious and connected whole, we know that our materials are genuine. . . . The scientific people tell us, in accents of the mildest and the gentlest, that our documents will not bear examination, that they are fragmentary and unsatisfactory. . . . But if ever historical evidence was strong, nay, irresistible, it is that which connects the Acts with the Epistles; it is that which connects parts of the Acts and parts of the Epistles, one with another, into one uniform, entirely satisfactory body of documentary historical evidence. — *Malletson*: St. Paul, pp. 423, 424.

§ 492. **From Ephesus to Troas and Macedonia.** When St. Paul left Ephesus he went straight to Troas, with the same high motive with which he was always actuated—that of preaching the Gospel of Christ. He had visited the town before, but his stay there had been shortened by the imploring vision of the man of Macedon, which had decided his great intention to carry the Gospel into Europe. But though his preaching was now successful, and “a door was opened for him in the Lord,” he could not stay there from extreme anxiety. . . .

Titus had been told to rejoin him at Troas; but perhaps the precipitation of Paul's departure from Ephesus had brought him to that town earlier than Titus had expected, and, in the uncertain navigation of those days, delays may easily have occurred. At any rate, he did not come, and Paul grew more and more uneasy, until in that intolerable oppression of spirit he felt that he could no longer continue his work, and left Troas for Macedonia. There, at last, he met Titus, who relieved his painful tension of mind by intelligence from Corinth, which, although chequered, was yet on the main point favourable. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 401, 402.

§ 493. Second Epistle to the Corinthians; Occasion, Place and Time of Writing. (1) *Occasion*. — At the time of the writing of this Epistle, Paul had recently left Asia: in doing so had come by Troas: and thence had sailed to Macedonia, where he still was. . . . In Asia, he had undergone some great peril of his life, . . . probably a grievous sickness, not unaccompanied with deep and wearing anxiety. At Troas, he had expected to meet Titus, with intelligence respecting the effect produced at Corinth by the first Epistle. In this he was disappointed, but the meeting took place in Macedonia, where the expected tidings were announced to him. They were for the most part favourable, but not altogether. All who were well disposed had been humbled by his reproofs: but evidently his adversaries had been further embittered. He wished to express to them the comfort which the news of their submission had brought to him, and at the same time to defend his apostolic efficiency and personal character against the impugnors of both. Under these circumstances, and with these objects, he wrote this Epistle, and sent it before him [by Titus and Luke, as bearers] to break the severity with which he contemplated having to act against the rebellious, by winning them over if possible before his arrival.

(2) *Place*. — The *place* of writing is nowhere clearly pointed out. . . . All that we can say is that the Epistle was written at one of the Macedonian churches; more probably at the last which he visited than at the first. The principal of those churches were at Philippi, Thessalonica, and Berea. . . . It would seem likely that Thessalonica was the place. But all is conjecture, beyond the fact that it was written from Macedonia.

(3) *Time*. — The *time* of writing is fixed within very narrow limits. About Pentecost A.D. 57 Paul left Ephesus for Troas: there he stayed some little time: thence went to Macedonia; and sufficient time had elapsed for him to have ascertained the mind of the Macedonian churches and to have made the collection. Here falls in our Epistle: after which he came into Greece (Corinth) and abode there three months: and then is found, after travelling by land through Macedonia, at Philippi on his return at Easter, 58. So that the Epistle was written in the summer or autumn of 57. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, Prolegomena, 2 Corinthians, pp. 59, 60.

§ 494. Preaching in Illyricum. As the historian is not with him, he writes in the third person, and the narrative is exceedingly brief; and into the short sentence, "When he had gone over those parts," we are to fit Romans 15: 19: "Round about even unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the Gospel of Christ." The journey to Illyricum fits here, and it fits nowhere else. Thence he came into Greece, and there abode three months. — *Malletson*: St. Paul, p. 428.

§ 495. From Macedonia to Greece; Three Months in Corinth. It would rather seem that Greece here denotes the Roman province of Achaia, comprehending Greece proper and the Peloponnesus, the capital of which was Corinth. As Paul must have spent several months in Macedonia and Illyricum, it would be

the winter season, and hence it is probable that he went to Greece (Corinth) by land. Athens is not again mentioned after Acts 18: 1, so that it is uncertain if he revisited that city. . . .

Three months were doubtless spent at Corinth, and in its neighbourhood. His long-promised visit to that city was accomplished, and he now carried into fulfilment his purpose of wintering there. It was during this residence at Corinth that Paul wrote the Epistle to the Romans . . . [which] was sent by Phœbe, a deaconess of the church at Cenchrea, the port of Corinth. — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 229, 230.

§ 496. **Companions of the Apostle and his Work at Corinth.** Besides the Apostle himself, there was the youthful Timothy . . . ; Luke, the accomplished physician, and now the Evangelist; Titus, on whose judgment and discretion Paul had twice relied to calm the disturbances in the Corinthian church; Trophimus, the Ephesian, the companion of Titus, and one of the delegates charged with the alms for the poor Hebrews; Jason, who had risked his life by giving shelter to the Apostle at Thessalonica; Tychicus the Ephesian, faithful as we shall see to the last . . . ; Erastus, the chamberlain of Corinth; and, perhaps, Sosthenes the Corinthian, who from his influence and character had been associated with Paul in the opening salutation of one of the Epistles; Sopater of Beroëa, Secundus of Thessalonica, Gaius of Derbe, and Gaius, Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus, all of Corinth.

With such a phalanx of trusty followers, the Apostle commenced his winter campaign for the extirpation of immorality and vice, and the overthrow of heresy and spiritual arrogance. Titus, Luke and Trophimus, who had preceded him, had done much, but only the hand of Paul could extract the evil by the roots. . . . As for the Judaizing faction, headed by their false apostle, they had set Paul at defiance while at a distance, had ridiculed his diminutive stature, mocked his feebleness of speech, and held up to derision his fulminating epistle addressed to them from Macedonia. . . . And now Paul had arrived, and, with a courage that never flinched, descended into the arena to measure his strength against his boastful antagonist. . . . From another quarter we may glean the fact, that under Paul's auspices order was fully restored in the Corinthian church. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 38, 39.

§ 497. **From Corinth to Troas. Plot of the Jews Discovered.** Paul, while at Ephesus, had announced an intention of passing the winter at Corinth. . . . Paul abode there the space of three months, [and] at the end of February, A.D. 58, . . . was ready to depart. The plan of his route at this time was to sail direct to Jerusalem, and thence to Rome, on his way into Spain. . . . Paul was now ready to pass from Corinth to Cenchrea, the place for embarkation for Jerusalem. A prospect of peril was before him, . . . and he was fully apprised of the danger. . . . He had once hesitated as to the propriety of visiting Jerusalem, but . . . Macedonia and Achaia had requested him to superintend the distribution of their alms, and after the liberality with which they had responded to his call he could scarcely refuse.

He was just on the point of starting from Corinth, when all his plans were deranged by the discovery of another conspiracy against his life. The Jews of Corinth on his former visit had attempted to procure his conviction before Gallio, the Proconsul. . . . Despairing of their object by legitimate means, they now had recourse to the work of assassins. What was the precise plot does not appear. . . . Paul eluded his adversaries by a change of route. He determined, instead of crossing the sea direct, to go round by Macedonia. The better to escape a watchful foe, Paul and his friends divided themselves into two companies, . . .

[one] should sail for Troas, the common resting-place, and there await the Apostle's arrival, and that Paul himself [and his company] . . . should make a forced march by land up to and through Macedonia, and rejoin the others at Troas. . . . [Paul tarried in Philippi during Passover week, March 27 to April 3.] At Neapolis he was detained by contrary winds, or perhaps no vessel was ready to sail at the moment of his arrival. At all events, he did not reach Troas until the fifth day after leaving Philippi, the day of starting included, which brings us to Saturday the 8th of April. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 40, 74, 75.

THE COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS IN JERUSALEM.

§ 498. **Liberality of the Macedonian Church.** Not only did Titus bring him [Paul] tidings of a better mind in the Corinthians, but also of the favourable progress of the great collection for Jerusalem. The Christians of Macedonia had not given out of their abundance, but of their poverty; not in flourishing times of prosperity, but in a great trial of affliction. They were a poor Church, yet "their deep poverty abounded unto the riches of their liberality" . . . , sending to distant brethren, between whom and themselves a wide sea rolled, [they] gave according to their power; yea, and beyond their power Paul bore record that they gave of their own accord. The secret of their power to do this lay in these words, that they "first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." — *Malleon* : St. Paul, pp. 430, 431.

For the reason why gifts were necessary, see Library Extracts, Lesson 4, §§ 67, 68.

§ 499. **Contribution from the Achaïans.** [In all probability, while at Corinth Paul] made excursions thence to . . . other neighbouring Churches, which (as we know) he had established at his first visit throughout all the region of Achaïa, and which, perhaps, needed his presence, his exhortations, and his correction, no less than the metropolitan Church. Meanwhile, he was employed in completing that great collection for the Christians of Palestine, upon which we have seen him so long engaged. The Christians of Achaïa, from whose comparative wealth much seems to have been expected, had already prepared their contributions, by laying aside something for the fund on the first day of every week; and, as this had been going on for more than a year, the sum laid by must have been considerable. This was now collected from the individual contributors, and entrusted to certain treasurers elected by the whole Church, who were to carry it to Jerusalem in company with St. Paul. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 154.

§ 500. **The Bearers of the Gift; Reasons for their Appointment.** The fact that he [Paul] had not received money from the Corinthians was used against him in a double way. It was said that that was a proof that he was not a genuine apostle; he had not the authority which belonged to the others. And on the other hand, it was said that he had had some deep purpose in this. He had not indeed taken their money, but that was a part of a plan by which he was going to get a much larger sum from them. . . . He had done this only that when the time came he might easily succeed in his nefarious purpose. . . . It was a plausible charge, for how could they know whether Paul really delivered all the money that was passed over to him? Paul was wise enough to see that such charges were likely to be made, and had forestalled them by arranging that every congregation that sent money should also send a delegate with it, to see that their contribution reached its destined place. In the whole matter of the contribution he had asked the churches to appoint some one to travel with him . . . that he might help in the collection and management of the money; for he had determined to make it impossible that any one should blame him and charge him with

dishonesty in money matters. So we find several "messengers of the churches" with him, a part of whose duty it was to see that the money reached its destination. This throws a strong side light on the character of Paul. — *Thatcher: Apostolic Church*, pp. 246, 247.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 501. **Unintentional Verification of the Narrative.** The harmony of the Acts and the epistles is an unintentional verification of the truth of the narrative. That the fragmentary statements of the epistles should so accurately fit into the more complete narrative of the Acts, is a marvelous confirmation of the truth of both epistles and Acts.

§ 502. **The Motive of Christ's Example.** Christian benevolence should be inspired by the thought that Christ gave himself for us, and that we owe him not only our own selves, but all that we possess besides; giving for the promotion of any interest connected with his kingdom should not therefore be permitted to degenerate into a grudging charity, but should rise into a most blessed privilege.

§ 503. **Principles better Guides than Arbitrary Rules.** In the matter of giving, as in other cases, when Paul was asked regarding questions of duty, he was not content with laying down a fixed rule, but sought for the underlying principle. A rule covers only a particular case, a principle covers a whole field of human actions.

§ 504. **Christian Charity.** The secret of Christian giving is stated in the words of Paul concerning the Macedonians, they first gave their own selves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God." Having given themselves, it was no difficult task for them to give of what men call "their own." "Remember that consecrated giving will be impossible without a consecrated giver. Therefore I counsel you to seek the special grace and anointing of the Holy Spirit, that he may work in you that consecration of heart and life on which so much depends." — *A. J. Gordon*. (Closing words of his letter to his church on the 25th anniversary of his pastorate.)

§ 505. **Systematic Giving better than Spasmodic Generosity.** A sum so large as to seem beyond one's ability if given at once, or even in two or three portions, can often be given without serious inconvenience if divided into fifty-two weekly offerings. A large number of regular weekly gifts, even though many of them be small, will secure larger amounts for church and mission work than can be obtained in any other way. Systematic giving tends to enlarge the sphere of one's sympathies, and to secure the best distribution of one's gifts; above all it cultivates the habit of giving from principle instead of from impulse, and deepens one's sense of responsibility concerning this virtue.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. **EPHESUS AS A CENTER OF CHRISTIAN INFLUENCE:** *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, pp. 349, 350. 2. **THE SITUATION IN CORINTH TO WHICH 2 CORINTHIANS ADDRESSED ITSELF:** *Denney*, 2 Corinthians, vol. ii, p. 2. 3. **MALICIOUS CHARGES OF THE CORINTHIAN FACTIONS:** *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 405-407, 424, 425; *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, pp. 244-249; *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 258-260. 4. **PURIFICATION OF THE CHURCH AT CORINTH:** *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 151-154. 5. **COLLECTION FOR THE SAINTS AT JERUSALEM:** *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, pp. 389, 390.

Lesson 27. — PAUL'S DEFENSE OF HIS APOSTOLIO AUTHORITY.
Reply to his Jewish Opponents in Corinth.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 506. *Design of the Lesson.* To show how Paul met the malicious charges of his enemies in Corinth that he was no true apostle of Christ, and that, even if he were a true apostle, he had overstepped the assigned limits of his authority by extending it so as to include the Corinthians.

§ 507. *Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.* (1) Notice that the ground on which Paul's enemies at Corinth assailed his authority as an apostle throws light on the character of his opponents, who were, as in Galatia and elsewhere, Judaizers, or Jewish Christians, who abhorred Paul's doctrine of freedom from the law, and who sought to foster a legal temper in the Pauline churches.

(2) Call attention also to the fact that the immediate occasion of the revolt against his authority was his attempt to enforce discipline in the church after it had permitted gross moral offenses to pass unrebuked.

(3) Observe the spirit in which Paul asserts his authority — with the utmost firmness, yet with the utmost humility, not resenting angrily the malicious slanders of his enemies, but appealing at the very outset to the meekness and gentleness of Christ as an example for every Christian to follow.

(4) Mark the line of argument adopted by Paul; an affirmation that his authority was derived from the Lord himself; that Christ had included the Corinthians within its scope, and that his credentials were his services and sufferings for Christ. Measured by this incontestable standard his claims were not only as good as those of his boastful rivals who could show no such proofs of devotion to Christ, but he was in no wise behind the very chiefest of the apostles. Of revelations he could also boast, but he would rather speak of the thorn in the flesh with which the Corinthians were acquainted and which was due to the very greatness of the revelations given to him.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.**PRELIMINARY.**

§ 508. *The Christ Party at Corinth.* There was a person in Corinth — more than one indeed, but one in particular [*cf.* 2 Cor. 11 : 20] . . . who claimed to be Christ's, or of Christ, in a sense which disparaged and was meant to disparage Paul. . . . The individuals here referred to are taxed with an exclusiveness and arrogance, and in the close of the chapter [10 : 12-16] with a wanton trespassing on Paul's province, which show that they were not native to the Church, but intruders into it. They were confident that they were Christ's in a sense which discredited Paul's apostleship, and entitled them, so to speak, to legitimate a Church which his labours had called into being. Everything compels us to recognise in them Jewish Christians, who had been connected with Christ in a way in which Paul had not; who had known Him in the flesh, or had brought commendatory letters from the Mother Church at Jerusalem; and who, on the strength

of these accidents, gave themselves airs of superiority in Pauline Churches, and corrupted the simplicity of the Pauline Gospel. — *Denney*: 2 Corinthians, p. 301.

§ 509. **Paul's Apostleship Denied. Purpose of the Attack.** In these Epistles [1 and 2 Cor.] the controversy between St. Paul and his opponents takes the form of an attack and a defence of his apostolic standing, and of his personal character in connection therewith. The advocates of a Judaistic Christianity do not seem to have made, in Corinth, any direct attempt to induce the members of the Church to submit to the rite of circumcision, or any other part of the Jewish law, probably for the simple reason that such an attempt in that centre of Greek life would have been futile. They appear to have confined their efforts in fostering a legal temper to questions of detail, such as the eating of meats offered to idols. . . . The anti-Paulinists would be obliged to pursue their end . . . by a circuitous course. They could not, with hope of success, teach their own doctrines, but they might assail the man who taught doctrines of an opposite nature, might blacken his character, and plausibly deny, or cunningly undermine, his apostolic standing. . . .

There is very little bearing on the great controversy to be found in the First Epistle. . . . Only a few slight hints occur here and there of the presence of a hostile element bent on undermining the apostle's influence and authority, such as the reference to the parties into which the Church was divided, the allusion to some who were puffed up because they thought the apostle was frightened to visit Corinth, and the abrupt manner in which, in the ninth chapter, the writer, in interrogative form, asserts his apostolic dignity and privileges. — *Bruce*: St. Paul, pp. 71, 72.

§ 510. **Source of the Discord; Paul's Command Disobeyed.** Unquestionably, this very serious crisis was connected with the affair of the incestuous person, whose excommunication Paul had demanded. . . . This circumstance could not by itself have led to the far-reaching effects which are now apparent. It became a source of discord, only from the opportunity that it afforded Paul's adversaries for attacking the integrity of his character and the authority of his apostleship. . . . Paul's directions had not been obeyed. Discussions had arisen on the mode of procedure proposed by the apostle, and the authority to which he laid claim. Instead of the unanimity in excommunicating the guilty person which he had expected from the Church, a majority and a minority had been formed. . . .

A division like this, on a point of discipline so simple and obvious, is matter for astonishment. . . . [Paul writes for them] "to deliver such a man unto Satan, for the destruction of the flesh, and the salvation of the spirit at the day of the Lord." What did Paul mean by this demand? Evidently, he was thereby exercising his *apostolic authority* over the Church of Corinth. He was convoking a general assembly of the Church, over which he wished to preside spiritually. He was acting in the capacity of an apostle of Jesus Christ, on a level with the Twelve, assuming to himself the same rights and authority. But it was precisely these rights and this authority that his Judaizing adversaries at Corinth disputed. To obey his orders, under these circumstances, would be to acknowledge the very thing that they denied him. Now, it must not be forgotten how powerful the Judaizing tendency represented by the partisans of Cephas and Christ was in Corinth. . . . Owing to the affair of the incestuous person and Paul's claims, that which in the first instance was only a discussion on the merits of different missionaries, had speedily become an ecclesiastical and dogmatic schism.

The apostle's letter had helped to bring on the crisis, and to raise the main question. . . . How could his adversaries accept declarations such as that of

1 Cor. 9 : 1, where Paul asserts his apostleship and founds it on the vision of Christ; or . . . that by the grace of God he had laboured more than all the rest? . . . Paul was accused of extravagant boasting. . . . Contrary to all reason and justice, he is usurping apostolic privileges. He is not competent for such an office, and has not been called to it. His wish is to lord it over Christ's heritage, in order to make his gain out of it. . . . We understand thus why it is that the whole discussion in this epistle [2 Cor.], from first to last, turns on Paul's apostolic authority. — *Sabatier* : St. Paul, pp. 166-168.

PAUL'S AUTHORITY AFFIRMED AND DESCRIBED.

§ 511. Paul Affirms his Apostleship. [It was the Judaizers in Corinth that had denied Paul's apostolate.] He now turns to the faction headed by the false teacher, and . . . levels against them the shafts of bitter irony, or threatens to pour out the vials of wrath if they did not repent. He commences by saying, that humble as he was in person, and feeble in speech, he was yet armed with power enough from Christ to bring down all spiritual pride in such as arrayed themselves against the truth. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds; casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and having in readiness to revenge all disobedience, until your obedience be fulfilled." — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 14, 15.

§ 512. The Spirit in which Paul Defended his Authority. It may be needful, on occasion, to assert oneself, or at least one's authority; but it is difficult to do it without sin. . . . Paul felt this danger, and in the very sentence in which he puts himself and his dignity forward with uncompromising firmness, he recalls to his own and his readers' hearts the characteristic temper of the Lord. How far He was, under the most hateful provocation, from violence and passion! . . . It is when we are in the right that we must watch our temper, and, instead of letting anger carry us away, make our appeal for the right by the meekness and gentleness of Jesus. This, when right is won, makes it twice blessed.

The words, "who in your presence am lowly among you, but being absent am of good courage towards you," are one of the sneers current in Corinth at Paul's expense. When he was there, his enemies said, face to face with them, he was humble enough; it was only when he left them he became so brave. This mean slander must have stung the proud soul of the Apostle — the mere quotation of it shows this; but the meekness and gentleness of Christ have entered into him, and instead of resenting it he continues in a still milder tone. . . .

He begs them so to order their conduct that he may be spared the pain of demonstrating the falsehood of that charge. He counts on taking daring action against some at Corinth who count of him as though he walked after the flesh; but they can make this face-to-face hardihood needless, and in the name, not of his own cowardice, but of his Lord's meekness and considerateness, he appeals to them to do so. — *Denney* : 2 Corinthians, pp. 291, 292.

HIS GLORYING IN LABORS AND PERILS.

§ 513. Paul Glories in Suffering for Christ's Sake. [In 2 Cor. 11 : 23-33 there is given] the most marvellous fragment ever written of any biography; a fragment beside which the most imperilled lives of the most suffering saints shrink into insignificance, and which shows us how fractional at the best is our knowledge of the details of St. Paul's life. . . .

Such had been his "preparation of feebleness," without which he could neither

have been what he was, nor have done what he did. Such is one glimpse of a life never since equalled in self-devotion, as it was also "previously without precedent in the history of the world." Here he breaks off that part of the subject. Did he intend similarly to detail another series of hair-breadth escapes? or glancing retrospectively at his perils, does he end with the earliest and most ignominious? Or was it never his intention to enter into such a narrative, and did he merely mention the instance of ignominious escape at Damascus, so revolting to the natural dignity of an Oriental and a Rabbi, as a climax of the disgraces he had borne? We cannot tell. At that point, either because he was interrupted, or because his mood changed, or because it occurred to him that he had already shown his ample superiority in the "weakness" of voluntary humiliation to even the most "super-apostolic Apostles," he here stops short, and so deprives us of a tale inestimably precious, which the whole world might have read with breathless interest, and from which it might have learnt invaluable lessons. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 417, 418.

§ 514. **A Glimpse of a Most Wonderful Life.** [This narrative 2 Cor. 11: 23-33] represents a life in the Western world . . . hitherto without precedent. Self-devotion for some special national cause had been often seen before; the career of Socrates was a lifelong service to humanity; but a continual self-devotion, involving hardships like those here described, and extending over so long a period and in behalf of no local or family interest, but for the interest of mankind at large, was, down to this period, a thing unknown. Paul did all this, and Paul was the first who did it. . . . It is remarkable that while there is nothing in this account which contradicts, yet the greater part of it goes far beyond the narrative of the Acts. It shows that the biography of the Apostle, unlike most biographies of heroes and saints, instead of overrating, underates the difficulties and sufferings which we learn from the Apostle's own account, the accuracy of which is guaranteed by the extreme and apparently unfeigned reluctance with which it is brought forward. — *Stanley*: In Meyer's Commentary, Corinthians, p. 668.

HIS GLORYING IN REVELATIONS, WEAKNESSES AND DISTRESSES.

§ 515. **The Particular Revelation Referred to by Paul.** He begins abruptly, "I know a man in Christ." . . . To St. Paul's consciousness the wonderful experience he is about to describe was not natural, still less pathological, but unequivocally religious. It did not befall him as a man simply, still less as an epileptic patient; it was an unmistakably Christian experience. He only existed for himself, during it, as "a man in Christ." "I know such a man," he says, "fourteen years ago caught up even to the third heaven," . . . [which] would be about A.D. 44. This forbids us to connect it in any way with Paul's conversion, which must have been twenty years earlier than this letter; and indeed there is no reason for identifying it with anything else we know of the Apostle. At the date in question, as far as can be made out from the Book of Acts, he must have been in Tarsus or in Antioch. The rapture itself is described as perfectly incomprehensible. He may have been carried up bodily to the heavenly places; his spirit may have been carried up, while his body remained unconscious upon earth: he can express no opinion about this; the truth is only known to God. . . . It was one, solitary, incomparable experience, including in it a complex of visions and revelations granted by Christ: it was this, at all events, to the Apostle. — *Denney*: 2 Corinthians, pp. 347, 348.

§ 516. **Purpose of the Revelation.** The revelations which Paul received were so sublime and holy, that the further communication of them would have been at variance with their character; what was disclosed to him was to be for him

alone, for his special enlightenment, strengthening, comforting, with a view to the fulfilment of his great task; to others it was to remain a mystery, in order to preclude fanatical or other misuse. . . . As to *what it was* that Paul heard for himself, the Fathers and schoolmen made many conjectures after their fashion. — *Meyer*: Commentary, Corinthians, p. 677.

§ 517. **Paul's Humility.** "For this cause I am well content, on Christ's behalf, in infirmities, in insults, in necessities, in persecutions and distresses; for when I am weak, then am I strong." With this noble word Paul concludes his enforced "glorying." He was not happy in it; it was not like him; and it is a triumph of the Spirit of Christ in him that he gives it such a noble turn, and comes out of it so well. There is a tinge of irony in the first passage in which he speaks of weakness, and fears that in comparison with his high-handed rivals at Corinth he will only have this to boast about; but as he enters into his real experience, and tells us what he has borne for Christ, and what he has learned in pain and prayer about the laws of the spiritual life, all irony passes away; the pure heroic heart opens before us to its depths.

The practical lessons of the last paragraphs are as obvious as they are important. That the greatest spiritual experiences are incommunicable; that even the best men are in danger of elation and pride; that the tendency of these sins is immensely strong, and can only be restrained by constant pressure; that pain, though one day to be abolished, is a means of discipline actually used by God; that it may be a plain duty to accept some suffering, or sickness, even a humbling and distressing one, as God's will for our good, and not to pray more for its removal; that God's grace is given to those who accept His will, as a real reinforcement of their strength, nay, as a substitute, and far more, for the strength which they have not; that weakness, therefore, and helplessness, as foils to the present help of God, may actually be occasions of glorifying to the Christian, — all these, and many more, are gathered up in this passionate Apologia of Paul. — *Denney*: 2 Corinthians, pp. 357, 358.

For article on the "Thorn in the Flesh," see Library Extracts, Lesson 8, § 155 (2).

HIS EQUALITY WITH THE CHIEFEST APOSTLES.

§ 518. **Paul States the Grounds of his Equality.** His refutation of these charges is his success and the history of his life. The Corinthians ought to know that he is an apostle, for they had received the gospel through him. He surely did not need letters of introduction and recommendation to them! It could not be necessary for others to write to them that Paul was an apostle! They themselves were his letters, the proof of his apostleship, since it was through him that they had believed. His work among them had been eminently successful. He had not been behind even the very chiefest of the apostles. All the signs of an apostle had been wrought among them. Let not the Corinthians think that they had been converted through the efforts of a second-class apostle, for the same signs and wonders and mighty works had been performed among them as in other places. They were in no respect inferior to other congregations. "And yet there is one point in which you are inferior to others; I was not a burden to you; I did not receive any money from you, as other missionaries received from their converts. Forgive me this wrong!" Such keen irony must have made them wince. *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 248.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 519. **The Weakness of Falsehood.** The only possible attacks on Paul's character that could be made were based on misrepresentation or actual falsehood.

Men might be influenced by such attacks for a time. But such charges needed only the light of truth turned upon them to reveal their emptiness, and to recoil with shame and confusion upon those who made them. Integrity of character is always its own best defense.

§ 520. **The Credentials of Discipleship.** Not empty professions of orthodoxy, nor boastful claims of spiritual superiority, nor punctilious observance of external rites and ceremonies; but a willingness to lose all things that men prize, to drink of the Master's cup of sorrow, and to be killed all the day long in self-forgetting and self-sacrificing service for him.

§ 521. **The Mission of Suffering.** The chief end of human life is not happiness, — if it were, this world is a failure. Happiness and enjoyment, pleasant in themselves, are not the forces that build up personal character, or obliterate the wrongs and evils of society. In the vast majority of instances suffering is not penal but vicarious — the innocent suffering in place of the guilty. And such suffering, from the Crucified One down, is and ever will be the mightiest redemptive force in the life of the individual or of the world.

§ 522. **The Purpose of the Revelation to Paul.** The revelation of celestial glories was given to Paul to strengthen him for the arduous duties of his daily ministry. So to many a weary toiler for Christ there has been given an hour of exalted communion with God, or a vision by faith of the heavenly city, which has cheered him in his sorrow, strengthened him in his service, and enabled him to press heroically on until his battle was ended and his victory won.

§ 523. **Prayer Answered by Refusal.** To pray for relief in distress is both natural and right; Christ so prayed and the apostle Paul. But in each prayer there was a note of submission to the Father's will, and in each case refusal was the answer given. A refusal is an answer to prayer if it be so given that God and the soul thenceforth understand each other.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. STATE OF THE CHURCH AT CORINTH: *Sabatier*, Apostle Paul, pp. 165-171.
2. REMONSTRANCE OF THE APOSTLE: *Ibid.*, pp. 172-179.
3. PAUL'S VINDICATION OF HIS APOSTLESHIP: *Thatcher*, Apostolic Church, pp. 229-231.
4. LIMITED SPHERE OF THE JUDAISTS AT CORINTH: *Bruce*, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, pp. 71, 72.
5. THE SIGNS OF AN APOSTLE: *Denney*, 2 Corinthians, ch. 17.
6. PAUL'S GODLY JEALOUSY FOR HIS CHARACTER AS AN APOSTLE: *Ibid.*, ch. 24.

Lesson 28. — PAUL ANTICIPATING THE CONFLICT CONCERNING THE JEWISH LAW IN ROME. The Sufficiency of the Gospel Shown.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 524. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the historical setting of the epistle to the Romans; and then, having pointed out very briefly the line of Paul's argument for the sufficiency of the gospel, to indicate more fully the culmination of this argument in the eighth chapter of the epistle.

§ 525. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Read § 526 on the origin, character and composition of the church in Rome, and secure any other information on these points that may be at hand.

(2) Get a clear conception of the time, place and occasion of the writing of the epistle to the church in Rome, and of the reason why Paul, in closing his missionary work in Asia Minor and Greece, did not at once realize his long cherished desire to visit Rome.

(3) Note carefully the line of argument in the epistle, — how Paul establishes first the universal guilt of the human race, and how therefore all are under condemnation, the Jews under the law, as well as the Gentiles without the law (1: 18—3: 20); but how a righteousness apart from the works of the law, available through faith for both Jews and Gentiles has now been revealed through Christ (3: 21—5: 21); and how, finally, those who are justified by faith are thereby delivered from the penalty of sin (ch. 6), freed from bondage to the law (ch. 7), and, victorious over sin and death, are made to share in the unspeakable glories of God's salvation (ch. 8).

(4) Show by a fuller study of the eighth chapter, what the new relation to God is into which believers are brought, what justification means, what it brings about, what is involved in adoption as children of God, and what is the victory which Christ gives.

(5) Finally use this survey of the argument of the epistle, and what we know of its historical setting and of the persistency with which the Judaizers opposed Paul, to determine as far as possible what was the relation of this epistle to the great controversy concerning the Gentiles and the Jewish law.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 526. **The Roman Church.** (1) *By whom Founded?* — *It was certainly not founded by an Apostle.* . . . The fact of St. Paul addressing it by letter, and expressing his intention of visiting it personally, would be inconsistent with his own declared resolution . . . of not working where another had previously laid the foundation. . . . Of this community, though not his own immediate offspring in the faith, Paul takes charge as being the Apostle to the Gentiles. The Roman Church owed its origin, partly perhaps to believing Jews, who had returned or been attracted thither in the first days of Christianity, but mainly to persons converted under Paul's own preaching. This conclusion is strengthened by the long list of salutations in ch. 16 to Christian brethren and sisters with whose previous course in many cases he had been acquainted. — *Alford: Greek Testament*, vol. ii, Romans, Prolegomena, pp. 33, 34.

(2) *Character and Composition.* — St. Paul addressed a mixed church of Jews and Gentiles, the latter perhaps, being the more numerous. There are certain passages which imply the presence of a large number of Jewish converts to Christianity. . . . It is professedly as the Apostle to the Gentiles that St. Paul writes to the Romans. He hopes to have some fruit among them, as he had among other Gentiles. . . . It was . . . from the Greek population of Rome, pure or mixed, that the Gentile portion of the Church was almost entirely drawn. . . . [The names of the believers indicate that they] belong for the most part to the middle and lower grades of society. . . . The heterogeneous composition of this church explains the general character of the Epistle to the Romans. In an assemblage

so various, we should expect to find not the exclusive predominance of a single form of error, but the coincidence of different and opposing forms. The Gospel had here to contend not specially with Judaism nor specially with heathenism, but with both together. It was therefore the business of the Christian Teacher to reconcile the opposing difficulties and to hold out a meeting point in the Gospel. This is exactly what St. Paul does in the Epistle to the Romans. — *Abbott: In Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Romans, The Epistle to the,"* pp. 2745, 2746.

§ 527. **The Epistle to the Romans.** (1) *By whom Written.* — The Epistle is universally believed to be by the Apostle Paul. Neither the Judaizing sects of old, nor the skeptical critics of modern Germany have doubted its Pauline authorship. It is equally certain that it was written originally in the Greek language, and by dictation to an amanuensis. Some have doubted the genuineness of particular passages, as chapters 12–15; but these suggestions have never found favor, even among rationalizing critics. The genuineness and integrity of the Epistle may be regarded as practically unquestioned, and as wholly indisputable. — *Abbott: Commentary, Romans, p. 81a.*

(2) *Time and Place of Composition.* — The time and place of the writing of the Epistle can both be clearly ascertained. . . . It was written when he was just about to leave Greece for Jerusalem, with collected gifts for the poor . . . soon after the date of 2 Corinthians, and just before the visit to Palestine of Acts [chs.] 20, 21: that is, it was written early in A.D. 58, during the fourth year of Nero.

Again, the *place* of writing was Corinth. *Cenchrea*, the Saronic port of Corinth, was evidently a neighbour-town; and in 16: 23 "*the city*" is a phrase which indicates a capital; and that capital was, by the obvious meaning of that verse, the place where St. Paul was at the time. And this localization is confirmed by comparing 16: 23, where a *Gaius* is St. Paul's actual host, with 1 Cor. 1: 14 where a *Gaius* appears as a *Corinthian* specially connected with St. Paul. — *Moule: In Cambridge Bible, Romans, Introduction, pp. 25, 26.*

(3) *Purpose of the Epistle.* — The letter is the ripest expression of Paul's views about the relation of the gospel to the law. In the struggle against the Judaizers he had developed his arguments and become perfectly clear about his doctrine. The letter is an attempt to outgeneral the Judaizers, and win the Roman church to his views before the Judaizers should enter the field. He determined to lay his gospel before them by letter, since he could not go in person. He first shows that the Jew through the teaching of the law, and the Gentile through the teaching of his conscience, must feel that they are sinners before God. It is impossible to earn salvation. The only way to obtain it is to believe God's word, and accept it as his free gift through Jesus Christ. — *Thatcher: Apostolic Church, p. 250.*

PAUL'S LONG CHERISHED DESIRE TO VISIT ROME.

§ 528. **Reason for Paul's Desire to Visit Rome.** The epistle to the Romans . . . seems on the one hand to conclude and crown the first stage of his life and work, and on the other to prepare for and inaugurate the second. The great missionary who had undertaken to carry the Gospel to the ends of the earth here pauses a moment, mid-way in his career. Taking a double survey, he looks back along the road he has traversed and forward to that which he intends to follow. Already from Jerusalem to Illyria there stretched the numerous succession of Churches which seemed to mark the halting places in his long journeys. From Corinth at the eastern extremity, he now sees opened before him an equally wide field of activity towards the west. Before pushing into these new regions, he

wishes to go up to Jerusalem once more. . . . Then, leaving Syria, Asia, and Greece behind him, he intends to penetrate to the limits of the West, perhaps never more to return. With such a project in view, Rome of necessity was the object which in the first instance attracted and engaged the apostle's thoughts. — *Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, pp. 187, 188.

§ 529. **Rome as a Center of Missionary Effort.** The Church of this city afforded the most promising and convenient vantage ground for his new mission. In the centre of Italy, equally distant from Germany, Gaul, Spain, and Western Africa, Rome had the further advantage of being in direct line with the course which the apostle had hitherto pursued, thus linking the work he was about to undertake with that which he had already accomplished; so that, in Paul's view, the Church of Rome was destined to become a mother Church, and to be for the West what the great cities of Antioch, Ephesus, and Corinth had been by turn for the East, alike the goal and starting point of his new missionary enterprises.

The epistle to the Romans is nothing else but the first step in the execution of these vast designs. In announcing his impending arrival at the capital of the Empire, the apostle seeks to prepare his field of action, and pave his way thither. A Christian Church had been in existence in Rome for some years, and it was of the first importance to secure its sympathy and support. — *Sabatier* : Apostle Paul, p. 188.

FREED FROM CONDEMNATION AND DEATH AND MADE SONS OF GOD THROUGH FAITH.

§ 530. **Meaning of the Term "Justification."** The word justification, it must be borne in mind, is a strictly forensic term, and carries along with it the associated ideas of law, condemnation, and acquittal. It had its origin in the Jewish conviction that the destiny of mankind was to be determined strictly by their compliance or non-compliance with the published law of God. It was in combating this conviction that the Apostle Paul, in his Epistles to the Romans and Galatians, elaborated the doctrine of justification, by setting forth faith in Christ crucified as the only, and the divinely appointed, method of salvation for all men. The doctrine conceives man to be amenable to law, and to have justly incurred its penalty from which Christ alone can procure his release and vindicate his right to be absolved. — *Robinson* : Christian Theology, p. 297.

§ 531. **No Condemnation. The Scriptural Doctrine of Justification.** Justification, so far as it is conceived of as a juridical act, rests beyond doubt, exclusively on the procuring efficacy of what Christ has wrought for us. In ourselves alone, every one of us is guilty and hopelessly condemned; in Christ, through faith in him, sin is blotted out for us both as a power and penalty. Thus it is Christ alone that saves us; our justification is solely on his account; metaphorically expressed, his righteousness is imputed to us, and through faith in him and in his sacrifice of himself for us, we are accounted righteous; but the literal fact is, that our relation to him as a living personal Saviour imparts to us a new religious life and a personal righteousness, without which salvation is impossible, and which in reality are the constituent elements of the salvation itself. Christ alone has conquered sin; and by bearing its penalty, death, and triumphing over it, has acquired the power of conferring a like victory upon all who, through loving trust in him as their personal Saviour, will receive it at his hands. — *Robinson* : Christian Theology, p. 299.

§ 532. **"Abba Father."** Abba is the Aramaic equivalent to the Greek *pater*. . . . It may have taken its rise among the Jews of Palestine after they had

become acquainted with the Greek language. In this case it is simply an expression of importunate entreaty, illustrating the natural mode of emphasizing by repetition of the same idea in different forms. This latter explanation seems simpler, and best explains the expression as coming from our Lord's lips. . . . This phrase is a speaking testimony to that fusion of Jew and Greek which prepared the way for the preaching of the gospel to the heathen. — *Lightfoot*: Galatians, p. 268.

§ 533. **The Sonship of Believers.** [The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God.] The testimony of our own spirit is borne in that cry of *conscious sonship*, "Abba, Father;" but we are not therein alone; for the Holy Ghost within us, yea, even in that very cry which it is His to draw forth, sets His own distinct seal to ours; and thus, "in the mouth of two witnesses" the thing is established. The apostle had before called us "*sons of God*," referring to our adoption: here the word changes to "*children*," referring to our *new birth*. The one expresses the *dignity* to which we are *admitted*; the other the *new life* which we *receive*. The latter is more suitable here; because a son by *adoption* might not be heir of the property, whereas a son by *birth* certainly is, and this is what the apostle is now coming to. — *Jamieson-Fausset-Brown*: Commentary, vol. i, Romans, p. 241.

RECEIVING THE HELP OF THE SPIRIT AND MADE MORE THAN CONQUERORS THROUGH CHRIST.

§ 534. **Work of Redemption.** "Whom God hath justified, them hath He also glorified." In these words the apostle puts together justification and blessedness. But justification, sanctification, and redemption are finely connected in their internal concatenation. . . .

The essential power of this community of life between redeemed persons and the Redeemer, consists in the *Holy Ghost*. The origination of a state of grace in faith and justification, its continuance and growth in sanctification, its consummation in the glorification of the body—all is conditioned by . . . faith; . . . prayer; renewal and holiness of walk; future quickening of the body. — *Lechler*: Apostolic and Post-Apostolic Times, vol. ii, pp. 69, 71.

§ 535. **The Help of the Spirit.** Then, in the same way, the Spirit also—as well as "the hope"—helps, as with a clasping, supporting hand, our weakness, our shortness and bewilderment of insight, our feebleness of faith. For what we should pray for as we ought, we do not know; but the Spirit Himself interposes to intercede for us, with groanings unutterable; but . . . the Searcher of our hearts knows what is the mind, the purport, of the Spirit; because God-wise, with divine insight and sympathy, the Spirit with the Father, He intercedes for saints.

Did He not so intercede for Paul, and in him, fourteen years before these words were written, when the man thrice asked that "the thorn" might be removed, and the Master gave him a better blessing, the victorious overshadowing power? Did He not so intercede for Monica, and in her, when she sought with prayers and tears to keep her rebellious Augustine by her, and the Lord let him fly from her side—to Italy, to Ambrose, and so to conversion?

But the strain rises now, finally and fully, into the rest and triumph of faith. "*We know not* what we should pray for as we ought"; and the blessed Spirit meets this deep need in His own way. And this, with all else that we have in Christ, reminds us of a somewhat that "*we know*" indeed; namely, that all things, favourable or not in themselves, concur in blessing for the saints. And then he looks backward (or rather, upward) into eternity, and sees the throne, and the King with His sovereign will, and the lines of perfect and infallible plan and

provision which stretch from that Centre to infinity. These "*saints*," who are they? From one view-point, they are simply sinners who have seen themselves, and "fled for refuge to the "one possible "hope"; a "hope set before" every soul that cares to win it. From another view-point, that of the eternal Mind and Order, they are those whom, for reasons infinitely wise and just, but wholly hidden in Himself, the Lord has chosen to be His own forever, so that His choice takes effect in their conversion, their acceptance, their spiritual transformation, and their glory. There, as regards this great passage, the thought rests and ceases — in the glorification of the saints. — *Moule* : Romans, pp. 233, 234.

§ 536. More than Conquerors through Christ. "What shall we then say to these things?" . . . Firm in his own revealed conviction, he has urged upon the conviction of the world, and fixed in the conviction of Christians for ever, the deepest truths of the Gospel entrusted to his charge. What remains but to give full utterance to his sense of exultation in spite of earthly sufferings, and "to reduce doubt to absurdity" by a series of rapid, eager, triumphant questions, which force on the minds of his hearers but one irresistible answer? In spite of all the anguish that persecution can inflict, in spite of all the struggles that the rebellious flesh may cause, "we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am convinced that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us for a moment from God's love manifested towards us in Christ Jesus our Lord." In spite of failure, in spite of imperfection, our life is united with the life of Christ, our spirit quickened by the Spirit of Christ, and what have we to fear if all time, and all space, and all nature, and all the angels of heaven, and all the demons of hell, are utterly powerless to do us harm? — *Farrar* : St. Paul, pp. 490, 491.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 537. Christ our Refuge. There is no safety, holiness or abiding happiness outside of Christ; no safety to him who is under condemnation, no holiness without Christ's righteousness, no happiness to him whose end is death.

§ 538. The Relation of Justification to Sanctification. Justification is followed by sanctification. The former is an instantaneous act, the latter is a life-long process. The foundation of justification is the atoning death of Christ; the living spring of sanctification is the indwelling in the human heart of the Holy Spirit.

§ 539. The Assurance of Faith. To the soul who is resting on the promises of God the words, "all things work together for good," are a statement of a living creed. Such a soul appropriates to himself God's truth and lives in harmony with his divine purpose.

§ 540. Foreknowledge and Foreordination. The sequence of events, resulting from a man's choice in life, is in no way changed by the fact that God knows the end from the beginning. Man's choice is as free before as afterwards, and cannot be affected by such knowledge. The end of both foreknowledge and foreordination is Christian character.

§ 541. The "Called" of God. The doctrine known as "Calling and Election," considered from any point of view involves difficulties that cannot be satisfactorily solved with the light we now have. The vital consideration, however, for every one who hears the call of God, is not to stop and debate whether or not he

belongs to the elect. Remembering that it is God's wish that none should perish but that all should come to a knowledge of the truth, his first duty is to obey, and thereby insure to himself an entrance to the feast of divine love.

§ 542. **Security of the Believer.** By a series of questions, covering all possible contingencies, the apostle enumerates the possible circumstances that might separate the believer from Christ. Each is proven unavailing, and in a pæan of rejoicing Paul concludes his demonstration, to the satisfaction of Christians of all time, of the fact of Christ's power to save.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE THIRD PHASE OF THE JEWISH CONTROVERSY AS PRESENTED IN THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS: *Bruce*, St. Paul's Conception of Christianity, pp. 93, 94.
2. AUTHENTICITY OF THE CLOSING CHAPTERS OF ROMANS: Cambridge Bible, Romans, Int., pp. 27-29.
3. PARALLELS BETWEEN THE EPISTLE TO THE ROMANS AND THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS: *Ibid.*, p. 29ff.
4. THE CONDITION OF THE PAGAN WORLD AS PICTURED IN ROMANS, CH. I: *Abbott*, Commentary, Romans, pp. 42-51; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. I.
5. ST. PETER'S CONNECTION WITH ROME: *Moule*, Epistle to the Romans, p. 17, note; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 6.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 29. — PAUL'S RETURN TO JERUSALEM. The Close of
the Third Missionary Journey.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 543. **Design of the Lesson.** To follow Paul in his return from Corinth to Jerusalem at the close of the third missionary journey ; to indicate the character of his missionary work as seen in his farewell to the Ephesian elders, and to show his heroic spirit in his determination to go up to Jerusalem notwithstanding the repeated and inspired warnings that bonds and imprisonment awaited him there.

§ 544. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Briefly review Paul's route on his third missionary journey, from Ephesus through his second tour in Greece and back to Troas as given in Lesson 26 (see Map No. 12 in Quarterlies), mentioning the places visited by him and the epistles written while on the journey.

(2) Make a detailed study of his experiences at Troas, Miletus, Tyre and Caesarea; and note that as he advanced on his journey the forebodings of disastrous experiences at Jerusalem became more and more explicit, and yet that, no matter what he believed that the future might have in store for him, he never swerved for a moment from what he felt to be the path of divinely appointed duty.

(3) Notice that the fact of chief historical interest in connection with Paul's stay at Troas is the mention of the first day of the week as a time of Christian worship, and the light that this throws on the transition from the Jewish to the Christian sabbath.

(4) Point out, in connection with Paul's address at Miletus, that his missionary work at Ephesus and doubtless in all other places as well, was intensely direct and personal; that he not only preached to men in the mass, declaring unto them the whole counsel of God, but sought, by going from house to house, to come into loving contact with them individually; and that, having won them to the truth, he watched over them day and night with tears of sympathy and solicitude.

(5) Observe the deep interest in Paul and the anxiety for his welfare shown by the Christians at every point in his journey, and that this interest and anxiety seemed to culminate at Cæsarea where, with entreaties and tears, his friends sought to dissuade him from his course.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL AGAIN AT TROAS.

(For the connection of the narrative, see Library Extracts, § 497, Lesson 26.)

§ 545. **Paul's Stay at Troas.** [On] Saturday the 8th of April [Paul arrived at Troas]. . . . [There] he rejoined Timothy and the brethren, from whom he had separated at Corinth. Paul remained here a week and a day, that is, until Sunday, the 16th of April, the Christian sabbath, a sojourn the more remarkable, as we know that the Apostle was pressed for time. He had been obliged through the plot of the Jews to adopt a circuitous route, and he was now making all haste upon his road, so as "*if possible*" to reach Jerusalem before the feast of Pentecost, which would fall on the 17th of May. Perhaps the church planted at Troas on his former visit, when he was flying from Ephesus, might now from some peculiar circumstances imperatively require his presence. The delay, however, may have arisen from the mere necessity of attending upon the movements of the vessel. Troas was a city of considerable consequence, and the ship may either have unloaded there or taken a cargo on board, or adverse winds may have prevented her from sailing. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, pp. 75-77.

(For a description of Troas, see *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 205, 206.)

§ 546. **Paul's Last Day at Troas.** The labours of the early days of the week that was spent at Troas are not related to us; but concerning the last day we have a narrative that enters into details with all the minuteness of one of the Gospel histories. It was the evening which succeeded the Jewish Sabbath. On the Sunday morning the vessel was about to sail. The Christians of Troas were gathered together at this solemn time to celebrate that feast of love which the last commandment of Christ has enjoined on all His followers. The place was an upper room, with a recess or balcony projecting over the street or the court. The night was dark: three weeks had not elapsed since the Passover, and the moon only appeared as a faint crescent in the early part of the night. Many lamps were burning in the room where the congregation was assembled. The place was hot and crowded. St. Paul, with the feeling strongly impressed on his mind that the next day was the day of his departure, and that souls might be lost by delay, was continuing in earnest discourse, and prolonging it even to midnight; when an occurrence suddenly took place, which filled the assembly with alarm. . . . A young listener, whose name was Eutychus, was overcome by exhaustion, heat, and weariness, and sank into a deep slumber. He was seated or leaning in the balcony; and, falling down in his sleep, was dashed upon the pavement below, and was taken up dead. Confusion and terror followed, with loud lamentation. But Paul was enabled to imitate the power of that Master whose doctrine he was preaching . . . [and restored] the dead to life.

With minds solemnized and filled with thankfulness by this wonderful token of God's power and love, they celebrated the Eucharist feast. The act of Holy Communion was combined, as was usual in the Apostolic age, with a common meal; and St. Paul now took some refreshment after the protracted labour of the evening, and then continued his conversation till the dawning of the day. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 206-208.

§ 547. **The Miracle of the Apostle.** By some critics it is supposed that Eutychus was not dead, that he was merely taken up *for* dead, and that Paul, with clearer discernment, perceived that he was only stunned. The answer of Alford to this view seems to me conclusive: "The youth falls, and is taken up dead; so much is plainly asserted. Paul, not a physician, but an apostle, gifted, not with medical discernment, but with miraculous power, goes down to him, falls on him and embraces him, a strange proceeding for one bent on discovering suspended animation, but not so for one who bore in mind the action of Elijah and Elisha, each time over a *dead body*; and having done this, *not before*, he bids them not to be troubled, for *his life was in him*. I would ask any unbiassed reader, taking these details into consideration, which of the two is the natural interpretation — and whether there can be any reasonable doubt that *the intent of Luke* is to relate a miracle of raising the dead, and that he mentions falling on and embracing him as the outward significant means taken by the apostle to that end?" Add to this that there is no significance apparent in the incident, and no reason for the narrative, if it be not a miracle — the only one, I believe, in the N. T. performed within the church, or at night, or without the attestation of unbelievers to its reality. — *Abbott: Commentary, Acts, p. 219.*

§ 548. **Origin of the Observance of the First Day of the Week as the Christian Sabbath.** (1) [Acts 20: 7 and] 1 Cor. 16: 2, are distinct proofs that the Church had already begun to observe the weekly festival of the Resurrection in place of, or, where the disciples were Jews, in addition to, the weekly Sabbath. It lies in the nature of the case that those who were slaves, or freed-men still in service under heathen masters, could not transfer to it the rigid abstinence from labour which characterized the Jewish Sabbath. And on this day they met together, obviously in the evening, after sunset, to "break bread." — *Plumptre: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 333.*

(2) It seems to have been the practice of the early Christians from a very early period to meet in commemoration of the resurrection. Gradually this Christian day supplanted the Sabbath, though, for a time, both days were observed. The Jews demanded that the Gentile Christians should observe the Jewish Sabbath, a demand to which Paul told them not to accede (Col. 2: 16). The Christian weekly festival was called the Lord's Day (Rev. 1: 10); Sunday is a later title of heathen origin, being equivalent to Day of the Sun. There is no direct authority in the N. T. for any change of the day from the seventh to the first, except such as may be deduced from the apostolic practice. — *Abbott: Commentary, Acts, pp. 218b, 219a.*

(3) The introduction of the [Christian] Sabbath was not only in harmony with Christian feeling, but, as we have good reason to believe, was sanctioned and prompted by the special authority of the apostles. "It is in the highest degree probable," says Meyer, "that the observance of the Sabbath rests upon apostolic institution; since the gospel was extended among the heathen who had not been accustomed to the Jewish Sabbath, it was natural and necessary that the apostles should instruct them in regard to such a day, on account of the importance of the resurrection of Christ; and this supposition is an indispensable one, in order to account for the very early and general celebration of the Christian Sabbath." — *Hackett: Commentary, Acts, p. 251.*

§ 549. **Manner of Observing the Christian Sabbath.** If three or four brief texts were blotted out of the New Testament, it would be quite possible to argue from silence merely that the apostles and their immediate followers did not observe the Lord's Day in any way whatsoever, and that the custom of stated worship and solemn eucharistic celebrations on that day were a corruption intro-

duced in post-apostolic times. . . . The Acts of the Apostles tells us very little about it, simply because there is but little occasion to mention what must have seemed to St. Luke one of the commonest and best-known facts. But Justin Martyr some eighty years later . . . writes thus on this topic: "Upon the day called Sunday all who live in cities or in the country gather together unto one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things. Then we all rise together and pray, and as we before said, when our prayer is ended, bread and wine and water are brought, and the president in like manner offers prayers and thanksgivings according to his ability, and the people assent, saying Amen; and there is a distribution to each, and a participation of that over which thanks have been given, and to those who are absent a portion is sent by the deacons. . . . Sunday on which we all hold our common assembly, because it is the first day on which God, having wrought a change in the darkness and matter, made the world; and Jesus Christ our Saviour on the same day rose from the dead." — *Stokes* : Acts, vol. ii, pp. 394–397.

FROM TROAS TO MILETUS.

§ 550. **From Troas to Assos.** [At the conclusion of the all-night meeting in Troas] the ship was about to sail, and the companions of Paul's journey took their departure to go on board. It was arranged, however, that the Apostle himself should join the vessel at Assos, which was only about twenty miles distant by the direct road, while the voyage round Cape Lectum was nearly twice as far. He thus secured a few more precious hours with his converts at Troas. . . .

But the time came when Paul too must depart. The vessel might arrive at Assos before him; and, whatever influence he might have with the seamen, he could not count on any long delay. He hastened, therefore, through the southern gate, past the hot springs, and through the oak woods, — then in full foliage, — which cover all that shore with greenness and shade, and across the wild water-courses on the western side of Ida. Such is the scenery which now surrounds the traveller on his way from Troas to Assos. The great difference then was, that there was a good Roman road, which made St. Paul's solitary journey both more safe and more rapid than it could have been now. We have seldom had occasion to think of the Apostle in the hours of his solitude. But such hours must have been sought and cherished by one whose strength was drawn from communion with God. . . . And strength and peace were surely sought and obtained by the Apostle from the Redeemer, as he pursued his lonely road that Sunday afternoon in spring, among the oak woods and the streams of Ida. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 208, 209.

§ 551. **From Assos to Miletus; the Ephesian Elders Summoned.** St. Paul . . . joined the ship at Assos, and after three days' coasting voyage landed at Miletus on Wednesday, whence he despatched a messenger summoning the elders of the Church of Ephesus to meet him. The ship was evidently to make a delay of several days at Miletus. We conclude this from the following reason. Miletus is a town separated by a distance of thirty miles from Ephesus. A space therefore of at least two days would be required in order to secure the presence of the Ephesian elders. . . . It is very possible that the sermon recorded in this twentieth of Acts was delivered on the Sabbath, which . . . was as yet kept sacred by Christians as well as by Jews, or else upon the Lord's Day, when, as upon that day week at Troas, the elders of Ephesus had assembled with the Christians of Miletus in order to commemorate the Lord's resurrection. — *Stokes* : Acts, vol. ii, p. 405.

PAUL AT MILETUS. HIS FAREWELL TO THE EPHESIAN ELDERS.

§ 552. **Paul's Address to the Ephesian Elders.** Some critics have found fault with St. Paul's sermon as being quite too much taken up with himself and his own vindication. . . . The truth of the gospel was then associated in the closest manner with St. Paul's own personal character and teaching. The Apostle was just then assailed all over the Christian world wherever he laboured, and even sometimes where he was only known by name, with the most frightful charges; ambition, pride, covetousness, deceit, lying, all these things and much more were imputed to him. . . . St. Paul therefore, foreseeing future dangers, warned the shepherds of the flock at Ephesus against the machinations of his enemies, who always began their preliminary operations by making attacks on St. Paul's character. This sufficiently explains the apologetic tone of St. Paul's address, of which we have doubtless merely a brief and condensed abstract. . . . [This address] may be divided into four portions. The first part is retrospective, and autobiographical; the second is prospective, and sets forth his conception of his future course; the third is hortatory, expounding the dangers threatening the Ephesian Church; and the fourth is valedictory. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 406, 407.

§ 553. **The Farewell at Miletus.** After [Paul's words to the elders], which so well describe the unwearied thoroughness, the deep humility, the perfect tenderness, of his Apostolic ministry, he knelt down with them all, and prayed. They were overpowered with the touching solemnity of the scene. He ended his prayer amidst a burst of weeping, and as they bade him farewell — anxious for his future, anxious for their own — they each laid their heads on his neck, and passionately kissed him, pained above all at his remark that never again should they gaze, as they had gazed so often, on the dear face of the teacher who had borne so much for their sakes, and whom they loved so well. If Paul inspired intense hatreds, yet, with all disadvantages of person, he also inspired intense affection. He had — to use the strong expression of St. Luke — to tear himself from them. Sadly, and with many forebodings, they went down with him to the vessel, which was by this time awaiting him; . . . and with heavy hearts the Elders of Ephesus turned away to face once more . . . the trials that awaited them in the city of Artemis. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 517.

FROM MILETUS TO JERUSALEM.

§ 554. **From Miletus to Tyre.** [On the journey from Miletus] the wind was favourable, and the vessel the same day reached Cos, the garden of the Egean. The chief town, which was of the same name, lay on the eastern shore. On Tuesday, the 25th of April, they arrived at Rhodes. This city was delightfully situate at the western extremity of the island, on an eminence overlooking the famous port. As Paul entered the harbour he must have gazed with curiosity on the greatest of the seven wonders of the world, the huge Colossus, the mighty effort of Chares the Lindian, once towering 105 feet into the air, then prostrate in the dust. It was of brass, and had been erected in the third century B.C., and, after having stood for fifty years, the astonishment of the approaching mariner, was thrown to the ground by an earthquake. The legs only as high as the knees retained their upright posture, while the rest of the gigantic mass lay extended along the margin of the port. . . .

The following day, Wednesday, the 26th of April, Paul and his company sailed to Patara, the port of Xanthus, the capital of Lycia. . . . At Patara, fortunately, Paul and his company found a merchantman bound direct for Tyre, and thence to Acre. The ship in which he had arrived either stopped at Patara, or intended

sailing along the coast of Pamphylia and Cilicia. The good luck of meeting with a passage at once to Tyre would not only enable him to reach Jerusalem in time for the feast on the 17th of May, but would even place several surplus days at his disposal. On Thursday, the 27th of April, they set sail from Patara, and . . . would arrive at Tyre on Sunday, the 30th of April. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, pp. 97-99 101.

§ 555. **From Tyre to Cæsarea.** Paul and his comrades remained at Tyre a week, and at the end of that time he had so established himself in the affections of the brethren, whether his own converts or not, that with their wives and children they accompanied him out of the city down to the beach. They might never see him again, for here also it was announced to the Apostle that Jerusalem would be the scene of danger. Paul and the brethren knelt down together upon the sea shore and offered up a fervent prayer, and then, with a warm embrace, parted from each other. Paul embarked on board the vessel, and the Tyrians returned to their homes.

The ship sailed on Monday the 8th of May, and the same day arrived at Ptolemais, or Acre. Here closed the sea voyage of the Apostle — either the vessel did not sail any farther, or a land journey to Jerusalem from this point was more convenient. . . . A church had been planted at Acre, and Paul and his companions were evidently acquainted with the members of it, for Luke remarks that “we saluted the brethren and abode with them one day.” Cæsarea was forty-four miles, or two days’ journey from Acre, and on Wednesday the 10th of May they reached Cæsarea. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, pp. 104, 106.

§ 556. The Sojourn at Cæsarea; Predictions of Paul’s Captivity.

(1) Paul and his companions proceeded from Ptolemais to Cæsarea by land, . . . [and went] to the house of Philip the evangelist, being one of the seven. This was Philip whose evangelistic labours in Samaria were already recorded. We were informed that he went to Cæsarea; and now in this city, twenty years afterwards, he is visited by Paul. . . . The [four] daughters of Philip, influenced by the spirit of prophecy, foretold the sufferings which awaited the apostle at Jerusalem. — *Glaag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 264, 265.

(2) [Paul was at Cæsarea long enough] for the tidings of his arrival to reach Jerusalem, and for Agabus to come down in consequence. He took Paul’s girdle, and bound his own hands and feet. . . . It is interesting to note the revival of the old prophetic manner of predicting by symbolic acts. . . . Foreseeing the danger to which the Apostle would be exposed, [he] came down to Cæsarea, in a spirit of friendly anxiety, to warn him not to come. The feeling which led to the murderous plot of chap. 23: 12 could be no secret to a prophet living at Jerusalem.

For the first time the courage even of the Apostle’s companions began to fail, and St. Luke admits that he himself had joined in the entreaty. Could not they, who were less known, and therefore in less danger, go up [to Jerusalem] without him, pay over the fund that had been collected among the Gentiles to St. James and the elders, and return to him at Cæsarea? . . . They besought him, it will be noted, even with tears. . . .

[Then Paul said] What mean ye weeping and breaking [mine heart]? The intense sensitiveness of St. Paul’s nature shows itself in every syllable. . . . He adhered to his purpose, but it was as with a broken heart. . . . [The reply of Paul’s companions] the will of the Lord be done . . . [is] the natural expression of resignation to what was seen to be inevitable, possibly used as a quotation from the prayer which the Lord had taught the disciples, and which He had used Himself. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 351, 352.

§ 557. **The Journey to Jerusalem.** Never had he [Paul] gone to Jerusalem without a heart full of emotion,—neither in those early years, when he came an enthusiastic boy from Tarsus to the school of Gamaliel,—nor on his return from Damascus, after the greatest change that could have passed over an inquisitor's mind,—nor when he went with Barnabas from Antioch to the council, which was to decide an anxious controversy. Now he had much new experience of the insidious progress of error, and of the sinfulness even of the converted. Yet his trust in God did not depend on the faithfulness of man; and he went to Jerusalem calmly and resolutely, though doubtful of his reception among the Christian brethren, and not knowing what would happen on the morrow. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 236.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 558. **The Significance of the Christian Sabbath.** Every Christian sabbath is a memorial of Christ's resurrection from the dead. It is "the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10), and should be welcomed with joy and gladness, not only as affording release from the burdens and perplexities of the week, but as giving opportunity for the cultivation of that spiritual life which comes to us only through the stupendous event which the Christian sabbath commemorates.

§ 559. **The Importance of Personal and Individual Work for Christ.** In Paul's farewell address to the Ephesian elders, note the emphasis placed by him on his face to face work with men for Christ. This is the most difficult of all religious work, but it is the most profitable. A prime requisite for it is an intense conviction of the *reality* of those things concerning which we seek to persuade men. One who only half believes in the ruinous consequences of sin, and the need and greatness of the salvation provided through Christ, or who has not himself had a convincing experience of these things, is in no position to convince others.

§ 560. **Paul's Firmness in the Path of Duty.** Note that in all the warnings which came to Paul on the way to Jerusalem, while the Spirit revealed what lay before him, the Spirit did not forbid his going there, as formerly he had forbidden his going into Bithynia (Acts 16:6, 7), but left him free to follow what course seemed best to him. Paul's heroic firmness under such circumstances in directing his way toward Jerusalem was not obstinacy, but an absolute surrender of himself to duty, that is *due-ty*, that which in the highest sense, is *due* from man to God. There is no heroism so great as self-surrender to God's will, without regard to consequences.

§ 561. **The Blessedness of Giving.** The idea of giving is too often restricted to the bestowment of money. Such giving may be only a form of selfishness, a desire to escape from that higher form of giving which is even more effective, the giving of one's self,—time, strength, personal sympathy, comfort, help. The life from which these things go forth is rich, noble, and joyous compared with the life that merely receives them.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. TROAS: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 205, 206.
2. ANALYSIS OF PAUL'S ADDRESS BEFORE THE EPHESIAN ELDERS: Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 274-283; *Malleon*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, pp. 454-462.
3. WARNINGS GIVEN THE APOSTLE AGAINST GOING UP TO JERUSALEM: Butler's Bible-Work, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 150, 151.

Lesson 30.—REVIEW OF PART III: LESSONS 14-29.**EDITORIAL NOTES.**

§ 562. **Design of the Lesson.** Read carefully what is said in § 247, Lesson 13, regarding the objects of a Review. The statements made there apply with equal force to this lesson.

§ 563. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Read also § 248, in Lesson 13, and apply the same to this lesson.

(2) Request the class to be prepared to state the contents of the Introductory Note to Part III in the Quarterly (see Lesson 14), and also of the Introductory Note to this lesson. The former gives the leading characteristics of the Period covered by Part III, and the latter gives a summary of the entire history covered by the lessons in this Part, all of which should be carefully studied.

(3) If necessary, apportion these notes among the scholars to state their contents, and ask the others to make any additions that may be necessary to bring out all the facts referred to. Either by such statements or by question and answer bring clearly before the class a general survey of the ground covered during this quarter.

(4) Request each one of your pupils to prepare, and bring into class, complete itineraries of each of Paul's three missionary journeys, that is, lists of all the places visited by him and brief references to the leading events at each. Such itineraries should present substantially the following forms :

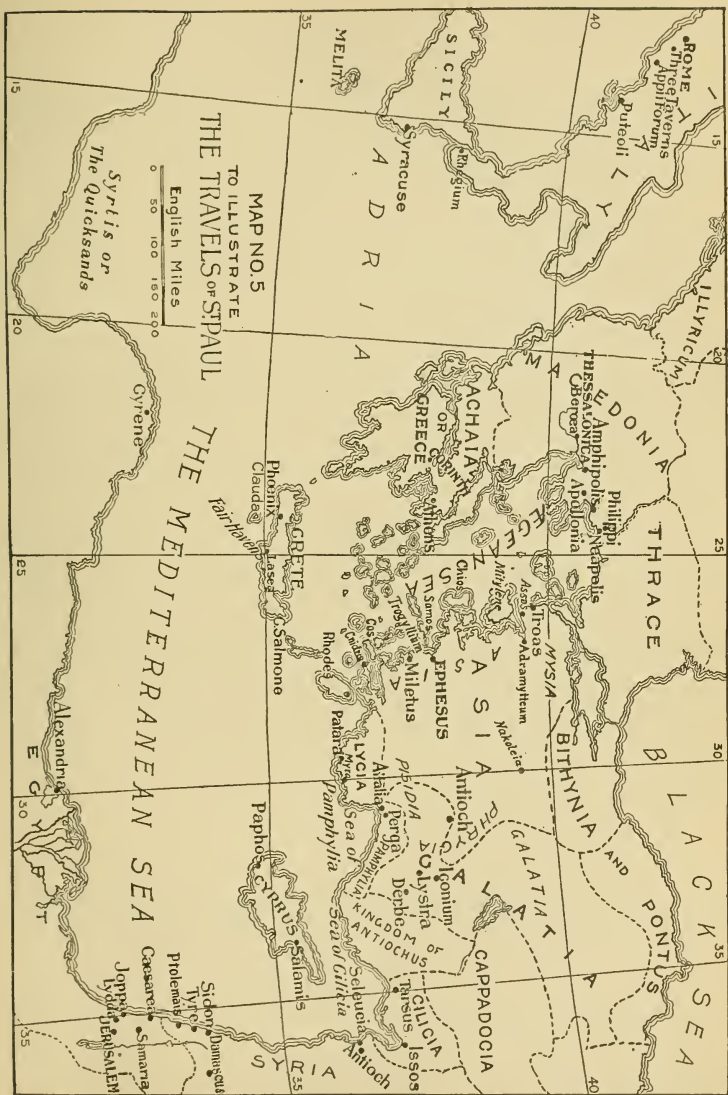
FIRST JOURNEY.

I. The Outward Journey. (1) *Antioch in Syria*: Barnabas and Saul sent forth, accompanied by Mark. (2) *Seleucia*. (3) *Salamis in Cyprus*. (4) *Paphos*: Sergius Paulus converted; Saul's name changed to Paul. (5) *Perga in Pamphylia*: Mark returns. (6) *Antioch of Pisidia*: Church established; persecution. (7) *Iconium*: Church established; persecution. (8) *Lystra*: Cripple healed; Paul and Barnabas worshiped and stoned; church established. (9) *Derbe*: Church established.

II. The Return Journey. (10) *Derbe*. (11) *Lystra*. (12) *Iconium*. (13) *Antioch of Pisidia*. (14) *Perga*: Gospel preached. (15) *Attalia*. (16) *Seleucia*. (17) *Antioch in Syria*.

SECOND JOURNEY.

I. The Outward Journey. (1) *Antioch in Syria*: Paul and Silas set forth. (2) *Syria and Cilicia*. (3) *Derbe*. (4) *Lystra*: Joined by Timothy. (5) "*The cities*": Doubtless Iconium, and Antioch of Pisidia. (6) *Troas*: Joined by Luke; Macedonian call. (7) *Samothrace*. (8) *Neapolis*. (9) *Philippi*: Conversion of Lydia and the jailer; church established. (10) *Amphipolis*. (11) *Appolonia*. (12) *Thessalonica*: Church established; persecution; Paul and Silas sent away by night. (13) *Beræa*: Church established; renewed persecution. (14) *Athens*: Preaching on Mars' Hill. (15) *Corinth*: Remained eighteen months; church established; 1 and 2 Thessalonians, and (?) Galatians, written.



II. The Return Journey. (16) *Ephesus*. (17) *Cæsarea*. (18) *Jerusalem*. (19) *Antioch*.

THIRD JOURNEY.

I. The Outward Journey. (1) *Antioch*. (2) *Galatia*. (3) *Ephesus*: Three years' ministry; church established; tumult stirred up by the silversmiths; 1 Corinthians written. (4) *Troas*: In great anxiety about Corinthian church; much disappointed at not meeting Titus. (5) *Macedonia*: Met Titus; 2 Corinthians written. (6) *Illyricum* (?). (7) *Greece (Corinth)*: Three months; Romans written; plot of the Jews.

II. The Return Journey, with the great collection. (8) *Philippi*. (9) *Troas*: Eutychus restored. (10) *Assos*. (11) *Mitylene*. (12) *Samos*. (13) *Miletus*: Farewell address to Ephesian elders. (14) *Cos*. (15) *Rhodes*. (16) *Patara*. (17) *Tyre*. (18) *Ptolemais*. (19) *Cæsarea*: Implored not to go to Jerusalem. (20) *Jerusalem*.

§ 564. Important Points to be Aimed at in the General Survey. (1) Make it a rapid survey of the entire Period covered in Lessons 14-29, showing that this was a period of great missionary activity, and indicating the successive steps of progress in the history.

(2) Note that the time covered by the three journeys is about fourteen years. Each journey occupied about four years, with an interval of two years between the first and second.

(3) Observe that as a result of these journeys churches were established in the most prominent cities and chief centers of Græco-Roman civilization between Antioch in Syria and Corinth in Greece, and that this was in accordance with a clearly defined policy on the part of Paul.

(4) Notice that these journeys represent the first going forth of Christians for the express purpose of carrying the gospel into the heathen world, and that the conversion of such great numbers of Gentiles led to the prolonged and wide-spread controversy concerning the relation of the Gentiles to the Jewish law.

(5) Recall the successive steps in this controversy as brought out in the lessons in Part III, and call attention to the fact that Paul's defense of the Gentiles from bondage to the Mosaic law concerned not the Gentiles alone, but signified the expansion of Christianity from a Jewish sect into a universal religion.

Lesson 31.—PAUL MOBBED AND ARRESTED IN JERUSALEM.

The Failure of his Attempt to Conciliate the Jews.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 565. Design of the Lesson. To show how Paul was received in Jerusalem by the elders of the church; and how, in attempting, through their advice, to conciliate the Christian Jews, who were hostile to him because of misrepresentations of his teachings concerning the Jewish law, he not only failed of the

end contemplated, but lost his liberty, and almost his life, in the tumult that followed.

§ 566. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Recall that the purpose of Paul's visit to Jerusalem at this time was to take thither the great offering from the Gentiles for the poor saints there; and that this offering was designed as a testimony of the appreciation of the Gentiles for the spiritual blessings that had come to them from the Jews, and to promote if possible a kindlier feeling in the Jews toward their Gentile brethren.

(2) Notice how after his cordial reception by the church and the elders, the apprehensions of danger to Paul are based more on the implacable hostility of the Christian Jews to his conception of the gospel, than on the hatred of the unbelieving Jews. It was for the purpose of conciliating the former that Paul was urged to comply with certain ritual services in the temple.

(3) Notice, furthermore, that this concession on Paul's part was not a surrender of his well-known principles; for his contention all along had been that while the ceremonial law was not binding on the Gentiles as a condition of salvation, the Jews, including himself, were at liberty to observe it as a matter of national custom. He undoubtedly knew, indeed, that the same principle which liberated the Gentile from all connection with the law would ultimately liberate the Jew also, but so far as we know this had not been publicly asserted by him.

(4) Show how Paul's countrymen would have murdered him, even as they had murdered his Master, because the revelation, by which he declared that his life had been changed and directed, did not correspond with their false and bigoted notions of what such a revelation should be.

(5) Mark that, when Paul was on the point of being torn asunder by their ferocious violence, or of being assassinated through their secret plots, the same Roman power that had delivered Jesus into their hands to be crucified was made a providential instrument to rescue and protect his apostle.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL'S ATTEMPT TO CONCILIATE THE JEWS IN JERUSALEM.

§ 567. **Paul Arrives in Jerusalem.** "When we were come to Jerusalem, the Brethren received us gladly." Such is St. Luke's description of the welcome which met the Apostle of the Gentiles on his arrival in the metropolis of Judaism. . . . The Apostle's spirit, which was much depressed, as we have seen, by anticipations of coldness and distrust on the part of the Church at Jerusalem, must have been lightened by his kind reception. He seems to have spent the evening of his arrival with these sympathising brethren; but on the morrow, a more formidable ordeal awaited him. He must encounter the assembled Presbyters of the Church; and he might well doubt whether even the substantial proof of loving interest in their welfare, of which he was the bearer, would overcome the antipathy with which (as he was fully aware) too many of them regarded him.—*Conybeare and Howson: St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 237.*

§ 568. **Paul and the Elders. The Offering Presented.** When the morning came, the Presbyters or Elders of the Church were called together by James, (who, as we have before mentioned, presided over the Church of Jerusalem), to receive Paul and his fellow-travellers, the messengers of the Gentile Churches. We have already seen how carefully St. Paul guarded himself from the possibility of suspicion in the administration of his trust, by causing deputies to be elected by the several Churches whose alms he bore, as joint trustees with himself of the fund collected. These deputies now entered together with him into the assembly of the Elders, and the offering was presented,—a proof of love from the Churches of the Gentiles to the mother Church, whence their spiritual blessings had been derived. The travellers were received with that touching symbol of brotherhood, the kiss of peace, which was exchanged between Christians of those days on every occasion of public as well as private meeting. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 238.

§ 569. **Proposal of the Elders.** [When the presentation was over, Paul] told of his labors among the Gentiles. With this they were pleased, but they could not assure Paul that it would be so acceptable to all as it was to them. They called his attention to the fact that there were many thousands of believing Jews, but they were still zealous for the law. And these were informed that Paul had been teaching the Jews to disregard the law, and were consequently very angry at him. In other words, *Paul was in danger from the Christians in Jerusalem* as well as from the unbelieving Jews. It was impossible that they should not learn of Paul's arrival; it was necessary, therefore, to take such measures as would prevent their doing any violence to him. There were four men at hand who had a vow upon them, and Paul was asked to join them in this and show his fidelity to the law by paying the costs which attended the completion of the vow. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, p. 252.

§ 570. **Paul's Attempt to Conciliate the Judaizers not a Contradiction of his Principles.** This consent of Paul to the advice of James and the elders has been taken by some for a contradiction of the words and character of the Apostle as represented in his own writings. But he has testified of himself that for the Gospel's sake he was made all things to all men, unto the Jews becoming a Jew that he might gain the Jews, for the same end, to them that are without law, as himself without law. And these brethren of the Church of Jerusalem to whom St. Paul joined himself were Christians, and therefore were not clinging to legal observances as of merit towards salvation, but as ordinances which were of divine origin, and which education had made them careful to observe. . . .

Assuredly there is as much of so-called contradiction between Paul as described in different places by himself, as between his own description and what St. Luke has left us of his history. Contradiction it is not, but only such concession as might be expected from one strong in the faith as St. Paul was when he was dealing, as he was called upon to deal, with two classes of men who could never be brought to the same standpoint. To observe the ceremonial law was not needful for the Gentiles, therefore the Apostle decried its observance and opposed those who would have enforced it. The ceremonial law was abolished for the Jew also in Christ, but it had a divine warrant for those who had been trained in it from their youth up, therefore all that the Apostle here desired was that their true value only should be set on externals. He felt that time would develop Christian worship to fill the place which the Temple Service for a long time must hold among the Christians of Jerusalem. — *Lumby*: In Cambridge Bible, Acts, pp. 295, 296.

§ 571. **The Nazarite Vow, and its Fulfillment.** What Paul Assumed in Accepting the Advice of the Elders. What did this proposal mean? It meant that the emancipation from the vow of the Nazarite could only take place at Jerusalem, and in the Temple, and that it was accompanied by offerings so costly that they were for a poor man impossible. A custom had therefore sprung up by which rich men undertook to defray the necessary expenses, and this was regarded as an act of charity and piety. . . .

The person who thus defrayed the expenses was supposed so far to share the vow, that he was required to stay with the Nazarites during the entire week, which, as we gather from St. Luke, was the period which must elapse between the announcement to the priest of the termination of the vow, and his formal declaration that it had been legally completed. For a week then, St. Paul, if he accepted the advice of James and the presbyters, would have to live with four paupers in the chamber of the Temple which was set apart for this purpose; and then to pay for sixteen sacrificial animals and the accompanying meat offerings; and to stand among these Nazarites while the priest offered four he-lambs of the first year without blemish for burnt offerings, and four ewe-lambs of the first year without blemish for sin offerings, and four rams without blemish for peace offerings; and then, to look on while the men's heads were being shaved and while they took their hair to burn it under the boiling cauldron of the peace offerings, and while the priest took four sodden shoulders of rams and four unleavened cakes out of the four baskets, and four unleavened wafers anointed with oil, and put them on the hands of the Nazarites, and waved them for a wave-offering before the Lord. . . . And he was to do all this, not only to disprove what was undoubtedly a calumny if taken strictly . . . but also to disprove that there was no truth in the reports about him, but that he also was a regular observer of the Law. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 524, 525.

PAUL MOBBED AND ARRESTED.

§ 572. **The Gentiles and the Courts of the Temple.** The area of the temple esplanade, or the so-called outer court, was [after the time of Zerubbabel] . . . very much enlarged, especially by Herod, so that it now formed a large quadrangle, its longer side being that which extended from north to south. Within this large square again there was an oblong quadrangular space enclosed by strong walls, the longer side, in this instance, running from west to east; this was the so-called inner court, or "the court" in the strict sense of the word. This court was approached by a flight of steps, and at the foot of this stair was a railing within which no Gentile was allowed to pass. Any Gentile who ventured to pass this boundary and set foot within the inner court was punished with death; and the Roman authorities respected the scruples of the Jews in regard to this matter to such an extent that they sanctioned the execution of this sentence even in those cases in which Roman citizens had been the offenders. To this railing notices were attached at certain distances from each other, with the prohibition and the penalty for infringing it inscribed upon them in Greek and Latin. According to Philo, there were keepers in his day not only at the entrances to the inner court, but likewise at the gates of the outer one as well, one of their principal duties being to see that the prohibition in question was rigidly complied with. In addition to these there were watchmen patrolling all round by night and by day to make sure that nothing of an unseemly character was going on anywhere. — *Schürer*: Jewish People, 2d Div., vol. i, pp. 265, 266.

§ 573. **The Castle Antonia.** About B.C. 24, Herod built for himself [in Jerusalem] a royal place, upon which marble and gold were lavished with profu-

sion. It was provided with strong fortifications, and thus was made to serve also as a castle for the upper city. Even during the time of Antony he had had the citadel north of the temple rebuilt and named Antonia in honour of his patron. . . . In Jerusalem there was stationed only one cohort. . . . The fort of Antonia, which Josephus describes as the regular quarters of the detachment, lay to the north of the temple. . . . Stairs led down from the fort Antonia to the court of the temple. This is just the position given it in the Acts of the Apostles. For when Paul, during the tumult in the temple, had been taken by the soldiers for his own safety and was being carried thence into the barracks, he was on account of the pressure of the crowd borne by the soldiers up the steps, and then, with the permission of the chiliarch, he made from these steps a speech to the people. . . . The direct connection between the fort and the court of the temple was of importance, since the latter required to be under constant supervision. At the chief feasts, guards were stationed in the corridors which surrounded the temple. — *Schürer: Jewish People*, 1st Div., vol. i, pp. 433, 434, 1st Div., vol. ii, pp. 55, 56.

§ 574. **Occasion of the Uproar against Paul.** “The Jews which were of Asia” [were] those who had come up [undoubtedly from Ephesus] to keep the Feast at Jerusalem. They, we may well believe, had been watching the Apostle eagerly as he passed in and out of the courts of the Temple. As it was, they seized him, with all the tokens of his purification still upon him, about to offer sacrifices, and raised a cry which was sure to throw the whole city in an uproar. . . . He had brought Greeks — *i.e.*, uncircumcised Gentiles — into the Holy Place — *i.e.*, beyond the middle wall of partition which divided the court that was open to strangers from that which none but Jews might enter. . . .

“Trophimus an Ephesian” [was the innocent cause of the trouble]. His face was naturally familiar to those who had come from the same city. They had seen the two [Paul and Trophimus] together in the streets, possibly near the entrance of the Temple, and, hatred adding wings to imagination, had taken for granted that St. Paul had brought his companion within the sacred enclosure. — *Plumptre: In Handy Commentary, Acts*, pp. 357, 358a.

§ 575. **Paul Attacked by the Mob; his Arrest.** At the outcry raised by the fanatical Asiatic Jews, the excitement quickly spread beyond the Temple precincts into the city itself. Paul was probably bound by the Temple authorities. The furious mob made a rush upon him, seized upon and drew him forth out of the sacred enclosure, . . . and the huge Temple gates . . . swung heavily upon their massive hinges under the united exertions of twenty men, for fear of further desecration, and that the sacred pavement might not be polluted with human blood.

Driving or hurling forward their intended victim into the Court of the Gentiles, raining blows upon him, their intentions soon began to be manifestly murderous, when a sound suddenly fell upon their ears, a sound before which their uplifted hands dropped in terror and apprehension for themselves, when there came swiftly upon the air the quick disciplined tramp and the martial clang of soldiers in arms, marching down upon the scene of confusion by the castle steps through the colonnaded cloisters that formed the communication between the Temple of Antonia and the Gentile court of the Temple. The sentries on the watch had quickly observed the symptoms of brutal outrage, and news came up to the officer in command that all Jerusalem was in an uproar. That officer was Claudius Lysias. . . . He is called a Chiliarch, and had the command of nominally a thousand soldiers. . . . The Romans were armed, and the Jews were not; yet the stronger were to some extent afraid of the weaker; and the officer deemed it prudent to withdraw the object of this fury, and themselves as well, into a safer place.

St. Paul was chained as their prisoner to two soldiers. — *Malletson*: St. Paul, pp. 489-491.

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE THE MOB.

§ 576. Paul Mistaken for the Egyptian. [Claudius Lysias was taking Paul] into the castle as a prisoner, to find out what the charges against him were, when, to his surprise, Paul spoke to him in Greek. He had thought that he was a certain Egyptian who not long before this had gathered together a band of four thousand Sicarii, or daggermen. These were most bitter opponents of everything that was Roman. They carried short daggers concealed under their robes, and managed to stab their enemies while they were surrounded by crowds, so that they could not be detected. . . . The governor thought that he had captured this leader [who had escaped] in the person of Paul. — *Thatcher*: Apostolic Church, pp. 254, 255.

§ 577. Paul Addresses the People. [Paul] took his stand upon the steps of the castle leading down to the Temple . . . ; and opening his lips, perhaps equally to the surprise of the Chiliarch and of the people, he addressed the crowd in the Hebrew language. . . . He knew how useless it would be to answer the charges brought against him, of teaching against the law in the Temple, and bringing Greeks into the Holy Place. He would not deliver his whole commission at once, and preach Christ; for he knew that he would not be heard for another moment if he ventured upon a subject so offensive to their inveterate prejudices. . . . [Throughout his speech Acts, ch. 22] observe the studied wise avoidance of the name of Jesus, who is referred to, ver. 14, as "the Righteous One,"—the very name used by St. Stephen, whose last address St. Paul seems to have had in mind more than once through this his last recorded address to any large body of Jews. . . .

He felt that he was approaching the end of his speech as he, with marked decision, spoke of Stephen as a witness for Christ . . . , [and] how the Lord had said unto him, "Depart, for I will send thee forth far hence to the Gentiles." . . . A sudden outbreak of fury revealed the spirit which ruled his hearers. It was not jealousy for the honour of the Lord, it was hatred of the Gentile. . . . All the violence and ferocity which had seemed allayed returned with redoubled force and intensity, and they cried, as they cried after Jesus, as they had cried for the blood of St. Stephen, "Away with him!" . . . A rush was made to try to secure their victim a second time, and put an effectual end to his hateful mission to the Gentiles. — *Malletson*: St. Paul, pp. 493, 496, 499-501.

PAUL'S APPEAL TO HIS ROMAN CITIZENSHIP.

§ 578. Paul's Rights as a Roman his Safe-guard against Scourging. Claudius Lysias knew his duty better than to allow summary justice to be executed before his eyes. . . . Lysias therefore commanded the soldiers to bring Paul out of the reach of this uncontrollable rabble, and withdraw him into the barracks. . . . He was to be "examined" as to his life and actions, not by straightforward questioning and the process of examination and cross-examination familiar to the law-abiding Christians, but by *scourging!* . . . for the purpose of ascertaining "wherefore they so shouted against him."

The Valerian law enacted that no Roman citizen should be bound or slain without sufficient cause. . . . But notwithstanding these safeguards, St. Paul was committed to the rough hands of the soldiery, who bowed his back and were stretching his limbs preparatory to receiving the cruel lashes, when Paul [said]

. . . "Is it lawful for you to scourge a man that is a Roman, and uncondemned?" . . . Immediately the centurion was aware of the danger they were incurring, he went to his chief, who had left the work of examination to a subordinate, and said to him, "Take heed what thou doest, for this man is a Roman." . . . The commander came to Paul at once, and . . . hastened, as far as he could, to repair his error by speedily sending away the executioners and proceeding to a more regular course of trial before the assembled powers of the Sanhedrim, which he caused to be summoned together on the following day. — *Malletson*: St. Paul, pp. 501-503; see also Library Extracts, Lesson 18, § 347.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 579. **The Real Value of a Gift.** The great gift of the Gentile churches to the poor saints in Jerusalem was not only a beautiful recognition of the obligations imposed by their new sense of Christian brotherhood, but a most appropriate expression of their gratitude and love. The real value of a gift, whether large or small, lies in the spirit that prompts it.

§ 580. **The Bitter and the Sweet in Life.** Notwithstanding Paul's heroism in going up to Jerusalem in face of all the warnings that had come to him, he must have felt greatly depressed and anxious as to his reception as the representative of the Gentiles, and the success of his mission as a mediator for them. The cordial and sympathetic spirit with which the church greeted him doubtless cheered his heart, and strengthened him to bear the ordeal of the following days. In the experiences of our lives God mingles the sweet with the bitter, that we may not be enfeebled and satiated by the one, nor discouraged and broken by the other.

§ 581. **Concessions for the Sake of Peace.** In acceding to the advice of the elders Paul's conscience remained clear, for he was not violating any principle of the gospel. So long as matters in controversy touch only personal views or conveniences, every possible concession should be made to the weaknesses and prejudices of others. But when principles are at stake, concessions are out of place. In refusing to make concessions, however, it is necessary to discriminate between loyalty to truth and personal obstinacy.

§ 582. **Conscience as a Guide.** Paul was as conscientious in his persecution of the church as, after his conversion, he was in upbuilding it. No man should ever violate his conscience. But in thus erecting conscience into the supreme arbiter of conduct it should never be forgotten that conscience itself needs enlightenment. He who conscientiously does wrong, is condemned, not for obeying conscience, but for suffering his conscience to remain darkened when light is within his reach.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. **CLAUDIUS LYSIAS, THE CHILIARCH:** *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 135; Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Lysias," p. 1704. 2. **THE EGYPTIAN FALSE PROPHET AND HIS OVERTHROW:** *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 125, 126. 3. **VARIATIONS IN PAUL'S SEVERAL ACCOUNTS OF HIS CONVERSION:** *Malletson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, pp. 498, 499. 4. **ROMAN CITIZENSHIP AND ITS PRIVILEGES:** *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, p. 232; *Olshausen*, Commentary, Acts, p. 547; Ency. Brit., vol. xx, Art., "Roman Law," p. 704a.

Lesson 32.—PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.**His Rescue from the Jews, and Transfer to Cæsarea.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 583. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Paul, when brought before the Sanhedrin, avoided an immediate sentence by dividing the council against itself; and how the disappointment caused thereby among his enemies, who had hoped that the court would condemn him to death, resulted in a conspiracy against his life, from which he was rescued by being suddenly taken to Cæsarea.

§ 584. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Gather what information is at hand concerning the composition, authority, and place of meeting of the Sanhedrin; and note that at this time it was subject to the Roman commander in Jerusalem who summoned it, as he would a company of soldiers, in order that he might have Paul tried before it.

(2) Recall the irreconcilable differences of belief between the Pharisees and Sadducees; the implacable hostility between these two great parties, both of which were strong in the Sanhedrin; and the infamous character of the high priest Ananias, by whose command Paul, at the very beginning of his trial, was smitten on the mouth.

(3) Call attention to the fact that Paul perceived at once that he could not expect a fair hearing from such a court, presided over by such a judge, they having assembled not to try but to condemn him; and that there was no escape for him except by winning the favor of the Pharisees through an appeal to their religious prejudices against the Sadducees.

(4) Show that while this availed to defer his condemnation temporarily, it only exasperated Paul's enemies the more that he should have so easily escaped from their deadly grip, and that it determined them to take measures against him from which they thought that there could be no possible escape.

(5) Observe, now, how God overrules all the malice of the wicked; how the plot is overheard and revealed to Paul and Lysias; how the Roman government becomes a bulwark of defense around God's servant; how Paul is removed in safety from a city out of which, but for this powerful protection, he could hardly have escaped with his life, and how in the transfer to Cæsarea the first step is taken toward the fulfillment of the divine promise that he should preach the gospel in Rome.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.**PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE THE SANHEDRIN.**

§ 585. **The Sanhedrin Summoned. Paul on Trial.** Claudius Lysias the Chiliarch was perplexed, and could not well decide what was best to be done with his prisoner, of whose alleged guilt he knew nothing. . . . The plan which commends itself best to his judgment is to call together the famous Council . . . , the Sanhedrin, which in the declining state of national power, he, a heathen ruler,

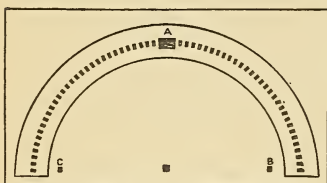
had authority to call, for he commanded its assembling just as he commanded his soldiers, and was as promptly obeyed. . . .

Hither St. Paul was brought unfettered, free to speak his whole mind. The chief captain stood near, not as in the speech on the castle stairs, an unintelligent hearer, but a listener, though for a very short space, to an address in the Greek language, which was used chiefly on his account. No other Roman was near; but many martial figures appeared on the frowning battlements of the massive tower which overshadowed the Temple precincts as the symbol of departed sovereignty.

What a strange scene lay before Paul! not one friendly, sympathizing countenance to encourage him; but at the higher end of the hall, the forms and harsh countenances of many men, not all strange to him; for had he not [probably] sat on those benches himself as a judge whence he now looked for sentence upon himself? — *Malleson* : St. Paul, pp. 505, 506.

§ 586. **The Sanhedrin: its Composition and Place of Meeting.** The Sanhedrim was the judicial body of seventy-two (commonly called the seventy), consisting first of twenty-four Chief Priests, being the heads of the twenty-four courses, and of twenty-four Elders, the representatives of the Jewish laity, and lastly of twenty-four Scribes or Doctors, the advisers of the assembly on questions of law. The Sanhedrim had originally sat in Gazith, an apartment in the inner temple, but as the Roman Emperors had granted the boon that whatever heathen passed the sacred limits might be instantly put to death, it was afterwards found unsafe to permit deliberations where the Romans themselves could not exercise a surveillance. According to tradition, the Sanhedrim ceased to hold their sessions in the Temple about twenty-eight years before the period of which we are speaking. They then moved down to the council-room, just without the Temple, and adjoining the western cloister on the site of the present Mehkimeh or Town Hall. Hither, on the 24th of May, the Chief Priests and Elders and Scribes were convoked [for the trial of Paul]. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 149.

On the Sanhedrin, its history, composition, jurisdiction, and judicial procedure, see *Library Extracts*, § 56, Lesson 4. On its meeting-place, see § 88, Lesson 5. On the attitude of the Sadducees and Pharisees toward the churches, and on their beliefs, see §§ 85, 86, Lesson 4.



Plan of seats, etc., in the Sanhedrin.

The Sanhedrin sat in a semi-circle. The president sat in the center of the half-circle, at the place marked A, and the other members in the order of their rank, the first one at his right hand, the next at his left, and so on. There were two scribes B, C, one to record verdicts of guilty, and the other, verdicts of acquittal. The prisoner stood somewhere within or in front of the semi-circle, in sight of all, perhaps at or near D.

§ 587. **Ananias, the High Priest.** Ananias, the High Priest, . . . [was] artful and designing, ostentatious of piety amongst the common people, yet guilty of the vilest practices, possessed of unbounded wealth dishonestly acquired, and by constantly pandering to the base avarice of the Roman Procurator, Felix, contriving to screen his iniquity from the arm of the law. The means employed by him for his aggrandisement are almost incredible for their enormity. He had in his pay a band of ruffians, who, when the harvest was ready, seized by force the tithes devoted to the use of the inferior priests, and if any resistance was made, the obstinacy of the tithe-payer was punished by blows. This impious example was soon copied by others in the priesthood, and the Jewish historian relates that

many of God's holy ministers died of actual starvation, from their accustomed provision being thus violently intercepted. Ananias meanwhile was living in the midst of luxury in his princely palace in the Upper City, and the cry of justice was raised in vain at the gates of the Prætorium. . . .

At the commencement of the Jewish war, he and his party, being overpowered by the opposite faction, retreated to the Upper City. The enemy followed, and the palace of Ananias was burnt over his head. He fled into the Prætorium, the palace of Herod, to which siege was laid, and in a few days it was stormed. Ananias concealed himself in an aqueduct in the pleasure-grounds of the Prætorium, *where the Sicarri or assassins soon discovered him, and dragging him forth from his lurking place, dispatched him with their poniards.*—*Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 135, 136, 149.

§ 588. **Paul before the Sanhedrin.** Lysias led his prisoner [in] and placed him before them. The *Nasi*, or President, was, as usual, the High Priest. The preliminary questions were asked, and then Paul, fixing on the assembly his earnest gaze, began his defence with the words, "Brethren, my public life has been spent in all good conscience towards God till this day." Something in these words jarred particularly on the mind of the High Priest. He may have disliked the use of the term "brethren," an address which implied a certain amount of equality. . . . The bold assertion of perfect innocence further irritated the presiding *Nasi*, and he may have felt, somewhat painfully, that his own public life had not by any means been in all good conscience either towards God or towards man. . . .

Scarcely had the Apostle uttered the first sentence of his defence when, with disgraceful illegality, Ananias ordered the officers of the court to smite him on the mouth. Stung by an insult so flagrant, an outrage so undeserved, the naturally choleric temperament of Paul flamed into that sudden sense of anger which ought to be controlled, but which can hardly be wanting in a truly noble character. . . . Smarting from the blow, "God shall smite thee," he exclaimed, "thou white-washed wall! What! Dost thou sit there judging me according to the Law, and in violation of law biddest me to be smitten?" . . . The bystanders seem to have been startled by the boldness of St. Paul's rebuke, for they said to him, "Dost thou revile the High Priest of God?" The Apostle's anger had expended itself in that one outburst, and he instantly apologised with exquisite urbanity and self-control. "I did not know," he said, "brethren, that he is the High Priest;" adding that, had he known this, he would not have addressed to him the opprobrious name of "whited wall," because he revered and acted upon the rule of Scripture, "Thou shalt not speak ill of a ruler of thy people." . . . In a crowded assembly he had not noticed who the speaker was. Owing to his weakened sight, all that he saw before him was a blurred white figure issuing a brutal order, and to this person, who in his external whiteness and inward worthlessness thus reminded him of a plastered wall of a sepulchre, he had addressed his indignant denunciation. That he should retract it on learning the hallowed position of the delinquent, was in accordance with that high breeding of the perfect gentleman which in all his demeanor he habitually displayed.—*Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 538-541.

§ 589. **Smiting on the Mouth an Eastern Custom.** This mode of enjoining silence is practised in the East at the present day. "As soon as the ambassador came," says a traveller in Persia, "he punished the principal offenders by causing them to be beaten before him; and those who had spoken their minds too freely, he smote upon the mouth with a shoe."—*Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 281.

§ 590. Paul, and "The Hope of the Resurrection." Seeing that, while his enemies were so excited, a calm defense was useless, and in fact impossible, he took the course of that wisdom, which, so long as it serves simply as a means to a higher end, and conflicts not with truth, is not only allowed, but even enjoined (comp. Mt. 10:16). He presented the weighty doctrine of the *resurrection* of the dead as the issue. Thus he cast a firebrand into the assembly, composed as it was of Sadducees (with Ananias as their head), and Pharisees, and drew the stronger party, at least for the moment, to his side. Of course he conceived the resurrection of the pious in general as intimately connected with, and resting upon, the resurrection of Jesus, which last, in fact, is expressly designated by Festus as the grand point of controversy.

It has been said that this stratagem was a dishonest evasion of the point in dispute. The specific accusation against him was, to be sure, that of blaspheming the law, the people, and the temple. But this was, in reality, only a negative expression for his energetic faith in Christ as the author of a new creation, through whom the old was passing away and all was becoming new. This was his sole crime. But what, in Paul's view, is the foundation of this faith? What is pre-eminently the basis of this conviction of the divinity of Christianity? Manifestly the fact of the resurrection, through which a new principle of life was introduced into humanity. Hence the apostles styled themselves emphatically, "witnesses of the resurrection," and it was for their testimony respecting this, that they were first persecuted, while the Sadducees were in power in the high council. . . .

The Pharisees actually gave . . . a testimony to the innocence of the apostle, which the simple love of truth and justice would never have drawn from them: "We find no evil in this man." They granted, also, that a spirit or an angel may have appeared to him on the way to Damascus. But this was all. They would not consent to acknowledge that spirit to have been the Messiah. At last, this party strife growing more and more violent and threatening the life of the apostle . . . Lysias drew him away, and brought him back to the castle of Antonia. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, pp. 311, 312.

PAUL'S RESCUE FROM ASSASSINATION AND TRANSFER TO CÆSAREA.

§ 591. Paul Cheered by the Lord. (1) Paul passed the night in the castle, and during his slumbers the Lord stood by him and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou hast testified of me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 152.

(2) By these few words, the Lord assured him of a *safe issue from his present troubles*; of an *accomplishment of his intention of visiting Rome*; of the certainty that however he might be sent thither, he should *preach the gospel, and bear testimony there*. So that they upheld and comforted him in the *uncertainty of his life from the Jews*; in the *uncertainty of his liberation from prison at Cæsarea*; in the *uncertainty of his surviving the storm in the Mediterranean*; in the *uncertainty of his fate on arriving at Rome*. So may one crumb of divine grace and help be multiplied to feed five thousand wants and anxieties. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. ii, Acts, p. 255.

§ 592. Plot to Assassinate the Apostle. The dawn of the next day sufficed to prove that his manœuvre in the Sanhedrin had only won a temporary success at the cost of a deeper exasperation. So unquenchable was the fury against him, and so inflamed was the feeling of disappointment that Lysias should have snatched him away from their revenge, that in the morning no less than forty Jews bound themselves with a terrible *cherem* not to eat or drink till they had killed him. . . . These forty *sicarii* went, not only without a blush, but with an evident

sense of merit, to the hostile section of the Sanhedrin, to suggest to them the concoction of a lie for the facilitation of a murder. . . . "Do you then, and the Sanhedrin, give notice to the commandant to bring him down to you, under pretext of a more accurate inquiry into his case. We, before he gets near you, are prepared to slay him." . . . These degenerate Jews and worldly priests agreed to it with avidity. But a secret known to forty conspirators, and requiring the complicity of an indefinite number more, is no secret at all. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, pp. 543, 544.

§ 593. **The Plot Revealed to Lysias.** Paul had a nephew in Jerusalem, who, in some way or other, got wind of this bloody conspiracy, and knowing that there was no time to be lost, went to the castle, and gained admission to see the prisoner, his uncle. As soon as Paul heard the story, he beckoned to the guard and said, "Take this young man to Captain Lysias. He has something to tell him." Lysias was anxious to learn anything that would clear up this extraordinary case. When the guard introduced Paul's nephew as one whom Paul had sent with a message, the captain took the young man's hand in his and drew him aside, where they could talk together without being overheard, and asked him what he had to say. The young man told him the whole story, — how the conspirators had taken an oath to kill his uncle; how the priests had fallen in with the plot, and were ready to help it on; and how they were waiting, at that very moment, to see the captain, and make their arrangements to have Paul brought down. That was enough for Lysias. He knew what desperate men he had to deal with. He dismissed his informant, reminding him that a close mouth, just then, was of the utmost necessity. — *Taylor* : Life of Paul, pp. 296, 297.

§ 594. **Paul Transferred to Cæsarea.** At nine o'clock in the evening, all the preparations having been made during the afternoon, while the shadows were deepening, and the darkness was settling down upon country and city, the rattling of horses' hoofs might have been heard in the court of the castle. Paul was sent to Cæsarea under military escort. He was a Roman, and Roman law would protect him from conspiracy and murder. Nearly five hundred soldiers, cavalry and infantry, marched out at the lower gate of the Castle of Antonia that night, Thursday, May 25, A.D. 58, with Paul the missionary mounted in the centre of the troop, and hurrying out of Jerusalem, passed rapidly up the highway across the country toward the Roman capital. In the morning they reached Antipatris, where they made but a brief halt. Leaving part of the soldiers to return to Jerusalem, the cavalry pushed on, and arrived at Cæsarea, probably that evening. Paul was taken directly to Felix, the governor of the province, and the letter of explanation from Captain Lysias was presented.

Felix read the letter, and then inquired what province the prisoner was from. Learning that he was a native of Cilicia, he said to Paul: "I will hear your defence when your accusers also have come," and gave orders that he be kept in some part of that magnificent Herodian palace or castle in which the governor himself resided. — *Taylor* : Life of Paul, pp. 297, 298.

§ 595. **Letter of Claudius Lysias to Felix.** It would seem . . . that Lysias wished to convey the impression that Paul's citizenship was the cause of his rescuing him, whereas he did not know this until afterwards. Du Bois thinks that the tribune here alludes to the second rescue, when he stood before the Sanhedrim; but this is opposed to Acts 23: 28; where it is stated that after the rescue Lysias brought him before the Sanhedrim. . . . Others think that the tribune intentionally told a falsehood in order to make his conduct appear more praiseworthy. He wished to conceal the fault he had committed in ordering a Roman citizen to be scourged, and misrepresented the circumstances of the case for his

own advantage. Probably, however, we have only an instance of mere negligence in composition, and not any wilful falsehood. All that the tribune wished to say was, that he had taken special precautions for the safety of his prisoner, because he had learned that he was a Roman. — *Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 325, 326.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 596. **The Condemnatory Power of a Righteous Life upon a Wicked Life.** Paul's claim that he had lived righteously, and with a clear conscience, stung the corrupt and infamous high priest to the quick. A declaration of innocence in his presence was intolerable as it called up his own wicked life, and therefore must be silenced. There is an instinctive recoil between purity and impurity, innocency and guilt, holiness and sin.

§ 597. **Rebuking the Wicked.** Paul's prophetic rebuke of the high priest was such as might be expected from a man of quick and powerful convictions of right and wrong. Wickedness should be rebuked. Justice demands it. At the same time Paul's courteous apology for having unknowingly rebuked the high priest, shows that even this right should be exercised with due regard for other considerations.

§ 598. **Trust in God and the Use of Means.** In Paul's trial before the Sanhedrin, where there was no chance of justice, he skilfully used the prejudices of the stronger party to save his life. To have attempted a formal defense before such an assembly would have been to throw away his life. God had decreed his deliverance, indeed, but he expected him, as under like circumstances he expects us, to use all legitimate means to that end.

§ 599. **Providence in Human Life.** In looking back over the history of Paul's life, it is not difficult to see the hand of the Lord in all that must at the time have seemed mysterious leading. And yet it all led to his preaching at Rome, — the consummation of his life-work. But it is equally true that there is a guiding hand in the life of the humblest of God's children and whether we realize it or not, that which may seem to us to be failure may contribute as much as our apparent success to the advancement of his kingdom on the earth.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PAUL'S ANSWER REGARDING THE HIGH PRIEST (VS. 5): *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 307-310; *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. ii, Acts, p. 253*b*. 2. THE CHEREM, OR VOW; ABSOLUTION FROM ITS OBLIGATIONS: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, p. 319. 3. PAUL'S ESCORT TO CÆSAREA: *Ibid.*, pp. 322, 323. 4. PAUL A PHARISEE: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 429. 5. VISIONS OF THE APOSTLE; OCCASION AND PURPOSE: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 263; *Malletson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, p. 514.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 33.—PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE FELIX. The Two Years of
Imprisonment in Cæsarea.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 600. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the immediate consequences of Paul's transfer to Cæsarea, as seen in the failure of his accusers to establish their charges against him, and in his continued imprisonment owing to the mercenary character of Felix.

§ 601. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Gather all available information concerning the character of Felix, his administration as procurator of Judea, and his relation to Drusilla.

(2) Consider the number and nature of the charges presented by Tertullus against Paul, and how the high priest and the elders sought to strengthen the prosecution, not by the presentation of competent witnesses, but by their own vehement and unsupported affirmations.

(3) Observe carefully Paul's reply to the charges preferred against him—his frank admission of the second charge, which in a Roman court involved no guilt; his unqualified denial of the other two charges; his detailed account of his conduct during his brief stay in Jerusalem, which could be tested by investigation; and his notice of the fact that his enemies had brought no witnesses to prove their charges against him.

(4) Note the reasons given by Felix for deferring his verdict, and that he seems to have taken no measures to bring Paul's case to a definite issue.

(5) In view of the personal character of Felix and Drusilla, note the bold conscientiousness, and yet admirable tact, of the apostle, in addressing them on the subjects he did in such manner as to give no occasion for anger, but much for the awakening of conscience.

(6) Show why Paul was not liberated by Felix, and how this easy confinement, which on the face of it seemed to be a great hardship, may after all have been of personal advantage to the apostle, exhausted and broken as he must have been by long and unremitting toil and sufferings.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL BEFORE FELIX. THE ACCUSATIONS.

§ 602. **The Character and Administration of Felix.** Felix is elsewhere known to us from the writings of Tacitus, Suetonius, and Josephus. . . . He was the brother of Pallas, the favourite and minister of the Emperors Claudius and Nero; and was originally a freedman of the Empress Antonia, the mother of Claudius, from whom he received the name Antonius. According to Tacitus, he was the governor of Samaria when Cumanus was procurator of Judea (A.D. 48). . . . On the deposition of Cumanus, he was, chiefly by the influence of the high priest Jonathan, appointed procurator of Judea, in the twelfth year of the reign of Claudius, A.D. 52, and was continued in his procuratorship by Nero through the influence of his brother Pallas.

His character and government are thus succinctly described by Tacitus: "he exercised the authority of a king with the spirit of a slave;" and again he says of him, "Relying on such powerful protection (namely, the influence of his brother Pallas), he supposed he might perpetrate with impunity every kind of villany." . . . He certainly displayed considerable vigour in clearing the country of robbers, and putting down rebellions; but he was cruel, tyrannical, and avaricious in his government. One of his worst actions was to employ the Sicarii to murder the high priest Jonathan, to whom he was partly indebted for his procuratorship, who had excited his displeasure by advising him to be more moderate in his government.

According to Suetonius, he was the husband of three queens: one of them was Drusilla, the daughter of Herod Agrippa I; a second, as we learn from Tacitus, was the granddaughter of Antony and Cleopatra, the niece of the Empress Antonia, and the full cousin of Claudius; the third is unknown. After ruling over Judea for the comparatively long period of seven or eight years, he was recalled by Nero, and succeeded by Festus, A.D. 60. Josephus informs us that, after his recall, the Jewish inhabitants of Cæsarea sent a deputation after him to Rome to accuse him before the emperor, and that he would certainly have been punished for his misgovernment had he not been protected by Pallas, who at this time was in high favour with the court.—*Gloag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 323, 324.

§ 603. **Drusilla, Wife of Felix.** She was not really his wife, having been seduced from her husband Azizus, prince of Emesa, [who had become a Jew for her sake], by Felix, through the intervention of the Cyprian sorcerer Simon. She was the daughter of Herod Agrippa I, and sister of Agrippa II. She had been at the age of six years betrothed to Antiochus Epiphanes, prince of Comagene, but his refusal to submit to circumcision and become a Jew, prevented the marriage. While living . . . with Felix, she bore him a son, Agrippa; both mother and son perished in the eruption of Vesuvius in the reign of Titus.—*Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 239*b*, 240*a*.

§ 604. **Paul and his Accusers before Felix.** Lysias [after having sent Paul away] communicated to the Sanhedrim that the case was remitted to the Procurator, and that they must make their accusations before Felix at Cæsarea. The wise precautionary measures of Lysias were, no doubt, a bitter disappointment to the persecuting faction; however, Paul had been removed, and to Cæsarea they must follow him. Ananias, with revenge rankling in his heart for the affront he had received in the presence of the Sanhedrim, set out from the Roman capital, accompanied by the elders. The arrogant High Priest was no spokesman, or at least not in any other language than his native Hebrew; and he, therefore, took

with him an eminent advocate at Jerusalem, called Tertullus, who could speak Greek with fluency and was well acquainted with the forms of Roman procedure. . . .

One part of Ananias's proceedings may be regarded with suspicion. He did not think it necessary to secure the presence of the most material witnesses. The Ephesian Jews, who had begun the uproar in the Temple, and should have been forthcoming, were studiously kept out of the way. On the fifth day after Paul's arrival, or May 30th, (an interval of twelve clear days having elapsed since the Pentecost), Ananias and his party being ready with their indictment, took their station in the Procurator's Court, or Judgment Hall, of the Prætorium. Felix entered, and having occupied his tribunal on the Gabbatha or raised platform, commanded the prisoner to be brought, and Paul was conducted into court.—*Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 156, 157.

§ 605. **Tertullus, the Lawyer.** (1) Nothing is known of him except the mention here. His name indicates that he was a Roman. The proceedings may have been either in the Greek or the Latin language. . . . Paid advocates were employed both in the Greek and the Roman courts, and in criminal actions both for the prosecution and the defence. The time of the speaker was limited by the court. Both parties were usually allowed to make two speeches, the complainant beginning, the defendant following, the complainant replying, and the defendant closing the case. As a general rule the accused, even when his case was conducted by a paid advocate, was expected to address the court himself, for the judges liked to form an opinion of him from his voice, look, and demeanor. The description of Tertullus here as an *orator* indicates that he was a paid advocate. It was common for young Roman lawyers to qualify themselves for practice in the Roman courts by provincial practice.—*Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, p. 237a.

(2) Tertullus began by judiciously applying the only compliment he was able to pay Felix without absolute contempt for the truth. "By thee, O Felix, *we* . . . enjoy great quietness; and by thy remarkable providence and foresight, evils are corrected for this nation." . . . All this fulsome flattery seems very much like veiled bribery. No doubt Felix hoped it was.—*Malleston*: St. Paul, pp. 525, 526.

§ 606. **The Charges against Paul Presented by Tertullus.** The accusation against Paul is threefold; he is charged (1) with causing factious disturbances among the Jews throughout the whole Roman empire, an offence distinctively recognized and punished with death by the Roman law; (2) with being a ring-leader of the heretical sect of Nazarenes, a name applied to the Jews in derision, but occurring in the N. T. only here; this was charged, not as against Roman law, but as against the law of Moses; (3) with an attempt to profane the Temple at Jerusalem, an offence against both Roman and Jewish law, since the former protected the Jews in the exercise of their worship.

The object of Tertullus, however, appears to be, not the condemnation and punishment of Paul by Felix, but his surrender to the Jewish authorities for trial. He therefore proceeds to misstate the facts respecting Paul's rescue. Paul was assailed by a mob, and would have been slain without trial but for the intervention of Lysias; Tertullus represents him as arrested legally, and taken from the hands of the Jewish authorities by the despotic act of the chief-captain. It should, however, be added, that the whole of vs. 7 and part of vs. 8 are of doubtful authority [they are omitted from the R. V.]. . . . But while external evidence is conflicting, internal evidence is in favor of their retention. Tertullus refers to no witnesses; the accusers to whom he refers in vs. 8 are the deputation from the Sanhedrim, who have no direct personal knowledge of the matter; the Asiatic Jews who first accused Paul of profaning the Temple have not been brought up to

Cæsarea, perhaps because their testimony would tend rather for Paul than against him. Of this fatal omission on the part of the prosecution Paul wisely avails himself in his defence.—*Abbott*: Commentary, Acts, pp. 237*b*, 238*a*.

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE FELIX.

§ 607. *Paul's Answer to the Accusations of Tertullus.* Then the Procurator, already impatient with the conviction that this was, as Lysias had informed him, some Jewish squabble about Mosaic minutiae, flung a haughty nod to the prisoner, in intimation that he might speak. St. Paul's *captatio benevolentiae* was very different from that of Tertullus. It consisted simply in the perfectly true remark that he could defend himself all the more cheerfully before Felix from the knowledge that he had now been Procurator for an unusual time, and could therefore, from his familiarity with Jewish affairs, easily ascertain that it was but twelve days since the Pentecost, to which feast he had come, not only with no seditious purpose, but actually to worship in Jerusalem; and that during that time he had discoursed with no one, and had on no occasion attracted any crowd, or caused any disturbance, whether in the Temple or in the Synagogues, or in any part of the city.

He, therefore, met the first and third counts of the indictment with a positive contradiction, and challenged the Jews to produce any witnesses in confirmation of them. As to the second count, he was quite ready to admit that he belonged to what they called a sect; but it was no more an illegal sect than those to which they themselves belonged, since he worshipped the God whom, as a Jew, he had always been taught to worship—frankly accepted their entire Scriptures—and believed, exactly as the majority of themselves did, in a resurrection of the just and the unjust. In this faith it had always been his aim to have a conscience void of offence towards God and towards man. He had now been five years absent from Jerusalem, and on returning with alms for the poor of his people, and offerings for the Temple, they found him in the Temple, a quiet and legally purified worshipper. For the riot which had ensued he was not responsible. It had been stirred up by certain Asiatic Jews, who ought to have been present as witnesses, and whose absence was a proof of the weakness of the case against him. But if their attendance could not be secured, he called upon his accusers themselves to state the result of their trial of him before the Sanhedrin, and whether they had a single fact against him, unless it were his exclamation as he stood before them, that he was being tried about a question of the resurrection of the dead.—*Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 548, 549.

THE DECISION DEFERRED BY FELIX.

§ 608. *The Immediate Result of the Trial.* There was all the appearance of truthfulness in St. Paul's words: and they harmonised entirely with the statement contained in the dispatch of Claudius Lysias. Moreover, Felix had resided so long at Cæsarea, where the Christian religion had been known for many years, and had penetrated even among the troops, that he had a more accurate knowledge of their religion than to be easily deceived by the misrepresentations of the Jews. Thus a strong impression was made on the mind of this wicked man. But . . . he could not make up his mind to acquit St. Paul. He deferred all inquiry into the case for the present. "When Lysias comes down," he said, "I will decide finally between you." Meanwhile he placed him under the charge of the centurion who had brought him to Cæsarea, with directions that he should be treated with kindness and consideration. Close confinement was indeed necessary, both to keep him in safety from the Jews, and because he was not yet acquitted: but orders were given that he should have every relaxation which could be allowed

in such a case, and that any friends of his should be allowed to visit him, and to minister to his comfort. We read nothing, however, of Lysias coming to Cæsarea, or of any further judicial proceedings. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 285, 286.

§ 609. **Paul before Felix and Drusilla.** Felix shortly after this [the trial] left Cæsarea himself, and when he returned, was accompanied by his wife Drusilla — the beautiful Drusilla, the daughter of Agrippa. . . . The Procurator had not long arrived, when he expressed a desire to hear Paul again. The Apostle's earnest and eloquent defence had left apparently a strong impression upon the mind of Felix, who was at least shrewd enough to appreciate talent. . . . There may besides have been, on the part of Drusilla, a natural curiosity to see the man whose name from her infancy had been so rife among her countrymen. Felix, at all events, sent for his prisoner, not, it seems into the judgment hall, but into the private apartments of the palace, and desired from him an exposition of the Christian faith.

A storm of conflicting feelings must have swept across the Apostle's breast at the scene before him. There sat Felix, old enough in years but older in his vices. . . . At his side was Drusilla, the fairest of the daughters of Israel, and now in the height of her charms, at the age of twenty, the scion of a royal line and yet living the spouse of a fortunate freedman. The oppressive exactions of the Procurator, his private debauchery, his utter disregard of the laws, his cold-hearted unfeeling abduction of another's wife were thoughts that forced themselves upon the Apostle's mind as he discoursed upon Christianity, and, unawed by the exalted station and his auditors, he expatiated freely upon Justice and Continence and the Judgment to come — "Felix trembled." The truths struck home, and the despot, lost in the reverie of the moment, saw himself in the gulf of perdition; he could bear no more, and commanded Paul from his presence, exclaiming, "Go thy way for this time, when I have a convenient season I will call for thee." — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 161, 162.

§ 610. **The Motive of Felix in Keeping Paul Confined.** Paul had indeed acquired over him [Felix] some of that ascendancy which could hardly fail to be won by so lofty a personality; and Felix, struck by his bearing, his genius, his moral force, sent for him not unfrequently to converse with him respecting his beliefs. But this apparent interest in religious subjects was, in reality, akin to that vein of superstition which made him the ready dupe of Simon Magus, and it did not exclude a certain hankering after a bribe, which he felt sure that Paul, who had brought considerable sums of money to Jerusalem, could either procure or give. He took care to drop hints which should leave no doubt as to his intentions. But Paul was innocent, and neither would he adopt any illicit method to secure his liberty, nor in any case would he burden the affection of his converts to contribute the ransom which he was too poor to offer. He did not wish by dubious human methods to interfere with God's plan respecting him, nor to set a questionable example to the future *libellatici*. He therefore declined to take the hints of Felix, and two years glided away, and he was still in prison. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 550, 551.

§ 611. **The Recall of Felix, and the Accession of Festus.** *When a period of two years was accomplished, Felix received Porcius Festus as his successor.* . . . [During this time Paul had had] intercourse with Philip, and other members of the Church of Cæsarea, as comforting and refreshing to him. . . .

The change of administration was caused by the complaints which the Jews brought against Felix, and which led Nero to recall him. . . . His successor,

Festus, who came to the province in A.D. 60, died in his second year of office. Josephus speaks of him as suppressing the outrages of the robbers who infested the country, and maintaining the tranquillity of the province. Felix, with characteristic baseness, sought by his latest act to court the favour of the Jews, and left the Apostle in prison as a set-off against the many charges which were brought against him. — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 387.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 612. **The Peril of Disregarding Conscience.** Under the searching words of Paul the guilty conscience of Felix was awakened. He was terrified at the revelation of his sin and its consequences. But instead of abandoning his sin, he sent away the preacher—the fatal error that thousands have made and are still making.

§ 613. **Convenient Seasons for Repentance that Never Come.** A genuine repentance shows itself in an immediate abandonment of sin. Deferring the abandonment of sin to a more convenient season shows the absence of a true repentance, and a mere momentary terror at the ultimate consequences of sin. The sinner in love with his sin does not really hope for a future repentance, but only for an escape from the penalty of sin.

§ 614. **The Paralyzing Effect of Formal Religion.** Drusilla heard the same solemn truths that so greatly terrified the irreligious Felix, but apparently was unmoved by them, probably because she was a Jewess, and had quieted her conscience with the external forms of a religion which had never influenced her life or conduct.

§ 615. **Avoiding even the Appearance of Evil.** As Felix by his conduct had virtually admitted Paul's innocence and only delayed liberating him in hope of getting money from him or his friends, some might have been tempted, in view of the importance of Paul's work in the churches, to yield to the governor's mercenary disposition. Paul, on the contrary, knew that his life was in God's hands, and that when his services were needed he would be set at work where God wanted him without the use of questionable means. God never requires these for the advancement of his kingdom.

§ 616. **A Divine Purpose in Seeming Adversity.** The long imprisonment at Cæsarea, so unjust and apparently needless, may have seemed a real hardship to the eager and zealous spirit of Paul. But it kept him in safety at a time when, if at liberty, he could hardly have escaped with his life; it gave him needed rest after fourteen years of exhausting toils and trials; it afforded quiet leisure to mature those rich and lofty conceptions of Christ and the church which mark the epistles of the imprisonment.

“ Judge not the Lord by feeble sense,
But trust him for his grace;
Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face.”

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE CITY OF ANTIPATRIS: Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 377^b. 2. ANCIENT CÆSAREA: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 164–167. 3. THE SECT OF THE NAZARENES: Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., “Nazarenes”; Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 380^b. 4. THE “TWELVE DAYS” SINCE PAUL'S ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM: *Malletson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, p. 528. 5. ROMAN PRISON CONFINEMENT: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 288. 6. PAUL A PRISONER AT CÆSAREA: *Conybeare and Howson*, Ibid., pp. 287–289. 7. POSSIBLE WRITINGS OF THE APOSTLE WHILE IN PRISON AT CÆSAREA: Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 387; *Stokes*, Acts of the Apostles, vol. ii, pp. 454, 455.

**Lesson 34. — PAUL'S TRIAL BEFORE FESTUS, AND HIS
DEFENSE BEFORE AGRIPPA. The Appeal to Cæsar.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 617. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the reasons that impelled Paul to appeal his case from the provincial courts to the tribunal of Cæsar; also the reasons for the subsequent hearing before Agrippa; the effect of his address upon his auditors, and their verdict concerning him.

§ 618. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Learn what you can respecting the leading characters in the lesson, Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice; try also to understand the conditions under which Roman citizens might appeal to Cæsar.

(2) Observe that the two years following the arrest of Paul had not diminished the hatred of his enemies in Jerusalem; that their first effort on the arrival of the new governor was to ask him to deliver Paul into their hands, their purpose being to assassinate him on the way.

(3) Call attention to the reasons that probably influenced Paul in transferring his case from the jurisdiction of Festus, and to the real or anticipated advantages to him of being tried before Cæsar.

(4) Note the governor's perplexity in regard to the accusation which should accompany the prisoner, and his ready response to the desire of Agrippa that Paul might be heard, not only to satisfy thereby the curiosity of the king touching the noted prisoner, but if possible to secure something upon which to base the needed charges.

(5) Show how Paul availed himself of the opportunity thus given, not so much to enter upon a personal defense of himself, as of Christianity; how his courteous and yet fearless appeal to the king's knowledge and conscience could only be escaped by an evasive and scornful reply; how Festus and Agrippa greed that he had done nothing worthy of death, and how Agrippa said that but for the appeal to Cæsar he might have been set at liberty.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL BEFORE FESTUS. HIS APPEAL TO CÆSAR.

§ 619. **The Visit of Festus to Jerusalem.** When a Roman governor came to his province . . . his first step would be to make himself acquainted with the habits and prevalent feelings of the people he was come to rule, and to visit such places as might seem to be more peculiarly associated with national interests. The Jews were the most remarkable people in the whole extent of the Jewish provinces: and no city was to any other people what Jerusalem was to the Jews. We are not surprised, therefore, to learn that "three days" after his arrival at the political metropolis, Festus "went up to Jerusalem." — *Conybeare and Howson: St. Paul*, vol. ii, p. 290.

§ 620. **The Request of the Jews and the Reply of Festus.** [At Jerusalem, the governor's] first interview was, of course, with the High Priest. Agrippa had by this time suspended Ananias in the High Priesthood, and appointed Ishmael, the son of Fabeï. We have no particulars of Ishmael's history, but he evidently entertained an acrimonious spirit against the Christian sect, for no sooner had Festus arrived at Jerusalem than Ishmael, and some of the most powerful of his countrymen, represented to the Procurator that a malefactor by the name of Paul had been left in bonds by Felix, and requested, as a personal favour, that he would issue an order for his execution. The answer of Festus was such as became an imperial Prefect, and worthy of being written in letters of gold. "IT IS NOT THE MANNER OF THE ROMANS TO DELIVER ANY MAN TO DIE BEFORE THE ACCUSED HAS HAD HIS ACCUSERS FACE TO FACE AND HAS HAD OPPORTUNITY TO ANSWER FOR HIMSELF CONCERNING THE CRIME LAID AGAINST HIM."

The Jews were foiled, and they now petitioned that if legal forms must be complied with, the prisoner might be sent for to Jerusalem, and be put upon his trial without delay. Their secret object in this was to wreak their vengeance upon Paul, by employing the Sicarii to assassinate him on the road. Whether Festus, from their over-anxiety upon the subject, suspected a sinister motive, or whether, like Lysias, he had received express intelligence of the conspiracy, he answered with proper spirit, that Paul was a prisoner at Cæsarea, and that he himself was going thither directly. "Let the chief among you, therefore," said he, "go down with me and accuse him, if there be any wickedness in him."—*Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 170, 171.

§ 621. **The Trial Before Festus, and the Appeal to Cæsar.** Festus remained "eight or ten days" in Jerusalem, and then returned to Cæsarea; and the accusers went down the same day. No time was lost after their arrival. The very next day Festus took his seat on the judicial tribunal, with his assessors near him, and ordered Paul to be brought before him. "The Jews who had come down from Jerusalem" stood round, bringing various heavy accusations against him (which, however, they could not establish), and clamorously asserting that he was worthy of death. We must not suppose that the charges now brought were different in substance from those urged by Tertullus. The Prosecutors were in fact the same now as then, namely, delegates from the Sanhedrin; and the prisoner was still lying under the former accusation, which had never been withdrawn. We see from what is said of Paul's defence that the charges were still classed under the same three heads as before; viz. Heresy, Sacrilege, and Treason.

But Festus saw very plainly that St. Paul's offence was really connected with the religious opinions of the Jews, instead of relating, as he at first suspected, to some political movement; and he was soon convinced that he had done nothing worthy of death. Being, therefore, in perplexity, and at the same time desirous of ingratiating himself with the provincials, he proposed to St. Paul that he should go up to Jerusalem, and be tried there in his presence, or at least under his protection. But the Apostle knew full well the danger that lurked in this proposal, and conscious of the rights which he possessed as a Roman citizen, he refused to accede to it, and said boldly to Festus:

I stand before Cæsar's tribunal, and there ought my trial to be. To the Jews I have done no wrong, as thou knowest full well. If I am guilty of breaking the law, and have done anything worthy of death, I refuse not to die: but if the things whereof these men accuse me are nought, no man can give me up to them. I APPEAL UNTO CÆSAR.—*Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 291, 292.

§ 622. **The Reason for the Appeal to Cæsar.** [A trial before the Sanhedrin] was practically a proposal to transfer the question back from the Roman

to the Jewish jurisdiction. But Paul knew very well that he had far more chance of justice at the hands of the Romans than at the hands of Jews, whose crimes were now dragging Jerusalem to her destruction. Jewish tribunals had invariably and even savagely condemned him; Gentile tribunals — Gallo, the Politarchs, the Asiarchs, Lysias, Felix, Festus, even the "Prætors," at Philippi, and at last even the monster Nero — always saw and proclaimed his innocence. But he was sick of these delays; sick of the fierce reiteration of calumnies which he had ten times refuted; sick of being made the bone of contention for mutual hatreds; sick of the arbitrary caprice of provincial governors. . . . As a Roman citizen he had one special privilege — that right of appeal to Cæsar, which was still left as the venerable trophy of popular triumph in the struggles of centuries. He had only to pronounce the word *Appello*, and every enemy would, for a time, be defeated, who was thirsting for his blood. He determined to exercise his privilege. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 554, 555.

§ 623. **The Significance of the Appeal. The Appeal Granted.** The right of appeal from a subordinate judge to the emperor was one of the privileges of a Roman citizen. By the Valerian law, a Roman citizen could appeal from the sentence of any magistrate to the tribunes of the people; afterwards the tribunital power was conferred upon the emperor, so that the appeal was to him. And the *Lex Julia* strictly forbade any unnecessary impediment to be put in the way of a Roman citizen who had thus appealed. After such an appeal had been admitted, the inferior magistrate had no further power in the case: it became highly penal after that to proceed to extremities. Mere provincials had not this privilege, but were entirely subject to the jurisdiction of their respective magistrates without appeal. . . . These appeals were generally made in writing; but when it was done in the open court, it was sufficient for the accused to declare his intention of appealing to Cæsar by uttering the single word *Appello*. Of course, such appeals could not all be heard by the emperor in person; and accordingly the Emperor Augustus appointed persons of consular dignity, one for each province, to hear them. . . .

It was the custom of the Roman governors to have a council consisting of their friends and other chief Romans of the province. . . . They appear merely to have acted as advisers in questions of difficulty. . . . The point of consultation in the present instance was, whether the appeal of Paul should be admitted. The governors of provinces were permitted to exercise a certain degree of discretion on this point: they were to throw no unnecessary obstacles in the way; but an appeal to the emperor might be disallowed if the affair did not admit of delay, or if the criminal were a known robber or pirate. As no reason for refusal could be stated in the case of Paul, his right of appeal to Cæsar was at once conceded. Festus accordingly pronounced the decision of the court: "Thou hast appealed unto Cæsar; unto Cæsar shalt thou go." — *Glaag*: Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 355-357.

For the Cæsar to whom Paul appealed, see Ency. Brit., vol. xvii, Art., "Nero."

PAUL BROUGHT BEFORE HEROD AGRIPPA II.

§ 624. **The Occasion of Agrippa's Visit to Cæsarea.** Only a day or two had elapsed after the appeal, when Agrippa II., the last of the Herods, and his sister Berenice came down to Cæsarea to pay their respects to the new Procurator. It was a compliment which they could never safely omit, and we find that they paid similar visits to each Procurator in succession. The regal power of Agrippa, such as it was, depended on no popular support, but simply and solely on the will of the Emperor. As a breath had made him first king of Chalcis (A.D. 48), then

of the tetrarchy of Philip (A.D. 52), and finally of various other cities (A.D. 55), so on any day a breath might unmake him. He was not, like his father, "the king of the Jews," and therefore St. Luke, with his usual accuracy in these details only calls him "the king;" but as he had succeeded his uncle Herod of Chalcis in the guardianship of the Temple, with its sacred robes, and the right of nominations to the High-priesthood, he practically became a mere gilded instrument to keep order for the Romans, and it was essential for him to remain on good terms with them. They in their turn found it desirable to flatter the harmless vanities of a phantom royalty. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, p. 556.

§ 625. **The Reasons for Paul's Appearance before Agrippa.** He [Paul] was summoned before the king for exhibition [vs. 22] rather than for trial, for the appeal already allowed took the case out of the hands of the procurator, who could no longer render judgment either for or against the prisoner (ch. 26 : 32). . . .

It is necessary that Festus should afford some excuse for this public exhibition of his prisoner; hence the explanation of vs. 26, 27. The perplexity was, however, a real one, for the governor was required to send, in writing, with the prisoner, a statement of the accusation; to send Paul without such written statement, or with one of a trivial character, would subject Festus to criticism, if not to censure. — *Abbott* : Commentary, Acts, p. 243a.

§ 626. **Paul before Agrippa.** The following day Agrippa and Bernice arrived at the Prætorium or palace with great pomp, and were ushered into the judgment-hall. Festus took his seat on the tribunal, and to do the more honour to his royal guests he commanded the attendance of the principal officers of the troops quartered at Cæsarea, and of the most influential of the civil magistrates. The 5th, 10th, and 15th Legions or regiments of the line, besides five cohorts or auxiliary corps, with accompanying squadrons of cavalry, were usually stationed at Cæsarea, and the gleaming armour and gay attire of the great captains of the Roman army of Judea with the furred gowns and flowing robes of the municipal authorities must have presented a most imposing spectacle, and well calculated to stimulate the energies of the Christian advocate. Festus now gave the order for the prisoner to be produced, and Paul, wearing his fetter, was ushered into court. — *Levin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 175.

PAUL'S DEFENSE BEFORE AGRIPPA.

§ 627. **The Nature of Paul's Defense.** Paul was brought before Agrippa at his special request; and accordingly that king opens the proceedings by requesting Paul to address the audience. It is, however, to be observed that Paul did not on this occasion stand as a prisoner at the bar before his lawful judges: his appeal to Cæsar had placed him beyond their jurisdiction; but he was called upon to give a statement of his own peculiar religious notions, and especially of the points of dispute between him and the Jews. — *Gloag* : Commentary, Acts, vol. ii, pp. 370, 371.

§ 628. **Paul's Defense of Christianity.** True to his character Paul began with the most polite and deferential forms of address. Again he told the story of his life, and grew eloquent as he spoke of his Master. But Festus was unmoved. He saw in Paul only an old man whose head was addled by long disputing about trifling questions concerning the law. In the midst of Paul's address he called out "Paul, Paul, you are crazy," and attempted thus to end the interview. Paul knew that Festus was a Roman, but he hoped that he might have better success with Agrippa, who was a Jew. So he turned to him with an appealing question: "I am not mad, most excellent Festus; but speak forth words of truth and soberness.

For the king knoweth of these things, unto whom also I speak freely: for I am persuaded that none of these things is hidden from him; for this hath not been done in a corner. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest."

But Agrippa was in the presence of a Roman who was ridiculing Paul and had no sympathy for either Judaism or Christianity. He did not wish to expose himself to the same ridicule, so he gave an evasive answer, "You think you can make me a Christian with little argument;" that is, "you think it will be an easy matter to convince me." The language is non-committal and ambiguous. Their meaning depends altogether on how the words were spoken. Seeing that the opportunity for further speech was gone, Paul called out: "I wish that all men, whether with little or great difficulty, were brought to be Christians as I am." But remembering that he was in chains, he quickly added in a half-playful way, "except that I would not wish to see them in bonds as I am."—*Thatcher: Apostolic Church*, pp. 258, 259.

§ 629. **Result of the Examination.** [Paul's reply] concluded the interview. King Agrippa had no desire to hear more: and he rose from his seat, with the Governor and Berenice and those who sat with them. As they retired, they discussed the case with one another and agreed that Paul was guilty of nothing worthy of death or even imprisonment. Agrippa said positively to Festus, "This man might have been set at liberty, if he had not appealed to the Emperor." But the appeal had been made. There was no retreat either for Festus or Paul. On the new Governor's part there was no wish to continue the procrastination of Felix; and nothing now remained but to wait for a convenient opportunity of sending his prisoner to Rome. — *Conybeare and Howson: St. Paul*, vol. ii, p. 298.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 630. **The Danger of Becoming the Victims of Violent Prejudices.** Paul's appeal to Cæsar showed that he expected more justice at the hands of the heathen, even from the monster Nero, than from his fellow-countrymen, the Jews. There is needed no further commentary on the power of passionate prejudices to blind men to all goodness and truth than the bloodthirsty cries, "Away with him," that greeted both Jesus and Paul.

§ 631. **Divine Compensations in Trial.** Paul's arrest and long imprisonment were doubtless great trials to him, but they gave him opportunities of preaching the gospel that he might never otherwise have enjoyed, — before his enemies in Jerusalem; before Felix and Drusilla; and before Festus, Agrippa, and Bernice in perhaps the most brilliant assembly that could then be gathered in Judea. While much seed fell by the wayside or among thorns, we may believe that some fell in good ground and brought forth an abundant harvest.

§ 632. **Obedience to the Heavenly Vision.** In Paul who was not disobedient to his vision the world has gained one of its noblest heroes and greatest leaders. To every man is given, in some measure, a similar experience — the sudden vision of higher ideals, the solemn call of divine voices — and on his action in respect to them depends all his future.

§ 633. **Opportunities Slighted and Forever Lost.** As Paul is a conspicuous example of obedience to the heavenly vision, so Agrippa stands out in history as one who through cowardice refused the opportunity of his lifetime, "loving the praise of men more than the praise of God." Doubtless a laugh from the illustrious audience greeted the king's sarcastic and evasive reply, but we never hear

of his being brought again face to face with salvation. The decision of that moment was his decision for eternity.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE CHARACTER OF FESTUS: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 170. 2. LUKE'S ACCURACY IN QUOTING THE EXPRESSION "UNTO MY LORD," ACTS 25:26: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 460, 461. 3. AGRIPPA AND FESTUS; THEIR RELATIVE RESPONSIBILITY: *Taylor*, Life of Paul, pp. 313, 314; *Hackett*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 308, 310; Cambridge Bible, Acts, p. 353. 4. THE WORDS OF AGRIPPA TO PAUL: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. ii, Acts, p. 283. 5. NERO, EMPEROR OF ROME: Ency. Brit., vol. xvii, Art., "Nero."

Lesson 35.—PAUL'S VOYAGE AND SHIPWRECK. His Experiences on the Way to Rome.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 634. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the experiences of Paul during the voyage from Cæsarea to Rome: the many perils encountered; the practical wisdom of the apostle; the safe arrival in Rome, and the warm-hearted reception accorded him by the Christians.

§ 635. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) In preparing the lesson note that the account of the journey may be conveniently divided into three portions: from Cæsarea to Fair Havens; from Fair Havens to Melita, and from Melita to Rome. In the class the first and third may be passed over rapidly, so that more time may be devoted to the account of the shipwreck itself.

(2) Study the lesson with constant reference to the Maps in the Lessons,—No. 13, for the voyage as a whole, and No. 9, for the scene of the wreck; especial attention is called to the Remark in connection with Map No. 9.

(3) Follow carefully Luke's narrative of the storm and shipwreck, noting every detail and its significance as given in the Explanatory Notes, or in the Library Extracts.

(4) Show how the sufferings and losses experienced after the departure from Fair Havens were directly due to the disregard of Paul's warnings; how his cheering words sustained his fellow-passengers when they despaired of their lives, and how to his alertness in frustrating the plot of the sailors all on board owed their safety.

(5) Call especial attention to the minute accuracy of the narrative; how it has been studied and expounded by experienced navigators; how it has been confirmed at every point by geographical, meteorological, and archæological considerations, and how competent judges have compared it to a leaf from a ship's log-book.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

THE VOYAGE AND THE STORM.

§ 636. From Cæsarea to Sidon. It was not long before a convenient opportunity [for Paul and his companion to embark] presented itself. A merchantman of Adramyttium, a city of Mysia, opposite the isle of Lesbos, was making her homeward voyage from Egypt and touched at Caesarea. The intention at this time was that Paul and his party should take their passage from Adramyttium, and then pursue the overland route to Italy by the great Via Egnatia from Neapolis through Philippi, Thessalonica, and the Macedonian towns to Dyrrhachium, the port for Brundisium. . . . The vessel sailed from Port Sebastus in the month of August, A.D. 60, and as the westerly winds generally prevail at that period of the year, they had a favourable breeze, and the next day ran into Sidon, a distance of about sixty-seven geographical miles. This maritime seat of commerce Paul had visited before, and must have preached the Gospel there more than once. He had therefore many friends in the town, and as the vessel was not to sail immediately, the centurion Julius . . . permitted him, chained by the wrist to a soldier, to call upon his Christian brethren, and receive from them those hospitalities which respect for the Apostle could not fail to elicit. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 181, 183, 184.



Map of St. Paul's Voyage to Rome.

§ 637. From Sidon to Myra. We do not know how long a stay was made at Sidon, but when they sailed again, the wind, being westerly as before, was not favourable to the course that they would gladly have taken to Myra. To make good that course would have necessitated working up against a heavy sea, nearly in the teeth of the wind, with the risk of a catastrophe on the lee-shore, presented by the land forming the south-west coast of Cyprus.

Therefore the master of the ship determined to steer to the eastward of that island, thus obtaining less wind and smoother water, and stretched to the northward on the port tack, until obliged to put about close to the Cilician coast, after

which he beat steadily but slowly towards Myra, assisted by the current which set to the westward, and occasionally by light northerly breezes off the shore, keeping near the land to be out of the strength of the foul wind. This is apparently what is meant by sailing under [the lee of] Cyprus. — *Malleson* : St. Paul, pp. 553, 554.

§ 638. **From Myra to Fair Havens.** [At Myra] they were fortunate — or, as it turned out, unfortunate — enough to find a large Alexandrian wheat-ship, which had undergone the common fate of being driven out of the direct course by the same winds which had baffled the Adramyttian vessel, and which now intended to follow the usual alternative of creeping across the Ægean from island to island, northward of Crete, and so to the south of Cythera, and across to Syracuse. . . . [In this they] sailed for Cnidus, the last point at which they could hope for any help from the protection of the shore with its breezes and currents. . . . Since, however, the wind would neither suffer them to put in at Cnidus, nor to continue their direct voyage, which would have passed north of Crete, the only alternative left them was to make for Cape Salmone, at the eastern end of the island, and there sail under its lee. To get to Salmone was comparatively easy; but when they rounded it they had the utmost difficulty in creeping along the weather shore until they came to a place called Fair Havens, a little to the east of Cape Matala, and not far from an obscure town of the name of Lasæa. — *Farrar* : St. Paul, p. 564.

§ 639. **Bound for Port Phenice. The Gale.** [At Fair Havens] we learn, they were detained till “navigation had become dangerous,” in consequence of the advanced state of the season. . . . It would appear that . . . all hope of completing the voyage during the present season was abandoned, and it became a question whether they should winter at Fair Havens, or move the ship to Port Phenice, a harbour on the same side of Crete, about forty miles farther to the westward. St. Paul assisted at the consultation, and strongly urged them to remain. . . . The officers of the ship were, however, of a different opinion and the centurion naturally deferred to it. . . . It was determined at this consultation to attempt to reach Phenice [and to winter there].

A moderate breeze from the south having sprung up, it was considered favourable for their purpose. They accordingly weighed anchor. After clearing the harbour, their course, till they had passed Cape Matala, was close to the land. A ship which could not lie nearer to the wind than seven points would just weather that point which bears W. by S. from the entrance of Fair Havens. We see, therefore, the force and propriety of the expression, — “They sailed *close* by Crete,” — which the author uses to describe the first part of their passage. From the anchorage at Fair Havens to Cape Matala the distance is four or five miles, and from thence to Port Phenice the distance is thirty-four miles; and, as the bearing of the course is W. N. W., the south wind was as favourable as could be desired, being two points abaft the beam. They had every prospect, therefore, of reaching their destination in a few hours. Their course lay across the great southern bight to the west of Cape Matala. They had not proceeded far, however, when a sudden change in the weather took place. . . . The ship was caught in a typhoon, which blew with such violence that they could not face it, but were forced, in the first instance, to scud before it. . . .

The sudden change from a south wind to a violent northerly wind is a common occurrence in these seas. The term “*typhonic*” [“tempestuous”], by which it is described, indicates that it was accompanied by some of the phenomena which might be expected in such a case, namely, the agitation and whirling motion of the clouds caused by the meeting of the opposite currents of air when

the change took place, and probably also of the sea, raising it in columns of spray. . . . [This storm] defeated their object of reaching Port Phenice, and forced them to run under the lee of Clauda. — *Smith: Voyage and Shipwreck*, pp. 45-47, 55-57, 59-63.

§ 640. **From Clauda to Malta. The Ship Laid to.** (1) At the time the ship was caught in the gale, she must have been near a small group of islands called the Paximades, in the Gulf of Messara. The island of Cauda lay about twenty-three miles to leeward, and thither they were driven . . . before the gale. Upon reaching it they availed themselves of the smooth water under its lee, to prepare the ship to resist the fury of the storm. Their first care was to secure the boat, by hoisting it on board. . . . St. Luke tells us that they had much difficulty in securing the boat. He does not say why; but independently of the gale which was raging at the time, the boat had been towed between twenty and thirty miles after the gale sprung up, and could scarcely fail to be filled with water. . . .

If they had continued to scud, [the wind would] have driven them directly towards Syrtis. . . . [Therefore they turned] the ship's head off shore, and set such sail as the violence of the gale would permit them to carry. . . . "They were thus borne along" . . . on the starboard tack. . . . With this notice concludes the first eventful day. — *Smith: Voyage and Shipwreck*, pp. 63-65, 68, 72.

(2) In this position navigators calculate that she would drift in a direction west by north, at the rate of thirty-six miles in twenty-four hours. Thirteen days and a fraction of drifting in this direction, and at this rate, would bring her to the island of Malta, and to that part of the island which tradition identifies with the scene of the shipwreck. In this respect, therefore, modern calculations exactly confirm the Scripture narrative. — *Abbott: Commentary, Acts*, p. 253*a*.

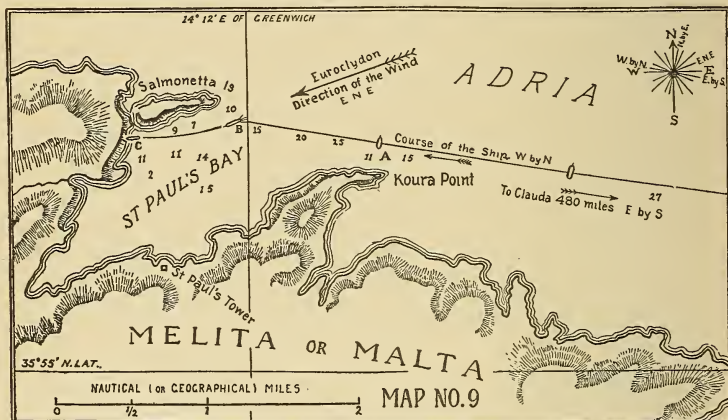
§ 641. **Incidents of the Storm. The Vision of Paul.** The violence of the storm continued without any intermission. On "the day after" they left Clauda, "they began to lighten the ship" by throwing overboard whatever could be most easily spared. From this we should infer that the precaution of undergirding [at Clauda, see Acts 27: 17] had only been partially successful, and that the vessel had already sprung a leak. This is made still more probable by what occurred on the "third day." Both sailors and passengers united in throwing out all the "spare gear" into the sea. . . . In the present case [the] evils were much aggravated by the continued overclouding of the sky . . . which prevented the navigators from taking the necessary observations of the heavenly bodies. . . . It was impossible to know how near they might be to the most dangerous coast. And yet the worst danger was that which arose from the leaky state of the vessel.

This was so bad, that at length they gave up all hope of being saved, thinking that nothing could prevent her foundering. To this despair was added a further suffering from want of food, in consequence of the injury done to the provisions and the impossibility of preparing any regular meal. . . . It was in this time of utter weariness and despair that to the Apostle there rose up "light in the darkness:" and that light was made the means of encouraging and saving the rest. . . . A vision was vouchsafed to him in the night. . . . When the cheerless day came, he gathered the sailors round him on the deck of the labouring vessel, and, raising his voice above the storm, [told them of God's promise of safety to all]. — *Conybeare and Howson: St. Paul*, pp. 331-333.

THE SHIPWRECK.

§ 642. **The Fourteenth Night. The Wreck on Melita.** The gale still continued without abatement. Day and night succeeded, and the danger seemed

only to increase: till fourteen days had elapsed, during which they had been "drifting through the sea of Adria." . . . At the close of the fourteenth day, about the middle of the night the sailors suspected that they were nearing land [as they heard the sound of the breakers]. . . . There was the utmost danger lest the vessel should strike and go to pieces. No time was to be lost. [Soundings were taken, and] orders were immediately given . . . [and they] let go "four anchors by the stern." For a time, the vessel's way was arrested: but there was too much reason to fear that she might part from her anchors and go ashore, if indeed she did not founder in the night: and "they waited anxiously for the day." . . .



Map to illustrate the shipwreck of St. Paul. The shipwreck probably occurred at the place marked C. For an explanation of the Map see the Lessons, Remark 14, Appendix, p. xxxi.

The rain was falling in torrents; and all hands were weakened by want of food. . . . The leak was rapidly gaining, and it was expected that each moment might be the last. Under these circumstances we find the sailors making a selfish attempt to save themselves . . . [by lowering] the boat over the ship's side. . . . St. Paul penetrated their design. . . . With his usual tact, he addressed not a word to the sailors, but spoke to the soldiers. . . . With that short sword, with which the Roman legions cleft their way through every obstacle to universal victory, they "cut the ropes;" and the boat fell off, and, if not instantly swamped, drifted off to leeward into the darkness, and was dashed to pieces on the rocks. . . .

A slight effort of imagination suffices to bring before us an impressive spectacle, as we think of the dim light just shewing the haggard faces of the 276 persons, clustered on the deck, holding on by the bulwarks of the sinking vessel. In this hour of anxiety the Apostle stands forward to give them courage. He reminds them that they had "eaten nothing" for fourteen days; and exhorts them now to partake of a hearty meal, pointing out to them that this was indeed essential to their safety, and encouraging them by the assurance that "not a hair of their head" should perish. So speaking, he set the example of the cheerful use of God's gifts and grateful acknowledgment of the Giver, by taking bread, "giving thanks to God before all," and beginning to eat. Thus encouraged by his calm and religious example, they felt their spirits revive, and "they also partook of food," and made themselves ready for the labour which awaited them. Instead of

abandoning themselves to despair, they proceeded actively to adopt the last means for relieving the sinking vessel. . . . The hatchways were therefore opened, and they proceeded to throw the grain into the sea. The work would occupy some time; and when it was accomplished, the day had dawned, and the land was visible.

The sailors looked hard at the shore, but they could not recognise it. . . . They perceived a small bay . . . , with a sandy or pebbly beach: and their object was, "if possible," so to steer the vessel that she might take the ground at that point. . . . We are told that they fell into "a place between two seas" . . . and then stranded the ship. The bow stuck fast in the shore and remained unmoved; but the stern began immediately to go to pieces under the action of the sea. . . .

[The centurion] directed those who could swim to "cast themselves into the sea" first, while the rest made use of spars and broken pieces of the wreck. Thus it came to pass that all escaped safely through the breakers to the shore. When the land was safely reached, it was ascertained that the island on which they were wrecked was Melita. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 334, 335, 337-341.

PAUL AT MELITA.

§ 643. **The Scene of the Shipwreck.** Malta was not then the densely crowded island which it has become during the last half century. . . . Much of the island was doubtless uncultivated and overrun with wood. Its population was of Phœnician origin [and though called] . . . "barbarians" [that is, persons whose language was neither Greek nor Latin], were favourably contrasted with many Christian wreckers in their reception of those who had been cast on their coast. They shewed them no "ordinary kindness;" for they lighted a fire and welcomed them all to the warmth, drenched and shivering as they were in the rain and cold. The whole scene is brought very vividly before us in the sacred narrative [in the story of Paul and the viper]. . . .

St. Paul was enabled to work many miracles during his stay at Malta. The first which is recorded is the healing of the father of Publius, the governor of the island. . . . This being noised through the island, other sufferers came to the Apostle and were healed. Thus was he empowered to repay the kindness of these islanders by temporal services intended to lead their minds to blessings of a still higher kind. And they were not wanting in gratitude to those, whose unexpected visit had brought so much good among them. They loaded them with every honour in their power, and, when they put to sea again, supplied them with everything that was needful for their wants. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 343-345.

FROM MELITA TO ROME.

§ 644. **From Melita to Puteoli via Syracuse.** "And after three months we departed in a ship of Alexandria, which had wintered in the isle (Melita), whose sign was Castor and Pollux. And landing at Syracuse, we tarried there three days." After leaving this port, which is not more than a day's sail from Melita, they proceeded circuitously [probably because of head winds], towards Rhegium. . . . But after one day the wind became fair (from the south), and on the following day they arrived at Puteoli, having accomplished a distance of about 180 nautical miles in less than two days. Puteoli was then, as it is now, the most sheltered part of the Bay of Naples. It was the principal port of southern Italy, and, in particular, it was the great emporium for the Alexandrian wheat ships. — *Smith*: Voyage and Shipwreck, pp. 115, 116.

§ 645. **The Appian Way.** The track of the road still remains. It was from thirteen to fifteen feet broad, and the foundation was of concrete, or cemented rubblework, and the surface was laid with large polygonal blocks of the hardest stone, usually basaltic lava, irregular in form, but fitted together with great nicety. The distances were marked by milestones, and at intervals of about twenty miles were "mansions" or post-stations, where vehicles and horses and mules were provided for the convenience of travellers, and the transmission of Government dispatches. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 222.

§ 646. **The Journey to Rome.** The distance [to be traveled] was about a hundred and forty-one miles. At the expiration of the week, Paul, with a promise of revisiting the Christians of Puteoli at a future day should he obtain his release, bade adieu to his kind friends; and Julius and his soldiers, with their prisoners, set forward on their route. The high road lay through Cumæ and Litemum to Sinuessa, thirty-three miles from Puteoli. Here they found themselves upon the celebrated Via Appia, running from Brundisium through Sinuessa to Rome. . . . From Sinuessa Paul and his company followed the Via Appia . . . to Terracina, a distance of forty-seven miles. From this point they might either take the more circuitous road by land round the Pontine marshes, or traverse the canal running across the morass in a direct line in a trackboat drawn by mules. . . . Which of these routes Julius adopted we are not informed, but both road and canal met at Appii Forum, a small town eighteen miles from Terracina. . . .

The Christians of Rome were already numerous, being many of them of exalted rank, and having heard from Puteoli of Paul's expected approach, a body of them, in honour of the great Apostle of the Gentiles, and in testimony of their sense of his unparalleled exertions and sacrifices in the sacred cause, now met him at Appii Forum, forty-three miles from the capital. . . . The reason of their not advancing *beyond* the Appii Forum probably was, that not knowing whether the Apostle would come by the road or the canal, they might possibly miss him by the way.

From Appii Forum the united company advanced along the Via Appia to Tres Tabernæ, or the Three Taverns, a well-known station, distant from Appii Forum ten miles, and here another party of Roman brethren, those perhaps of maturer age, bade welcome to the Apostle, so that from this point his progress, instead of the forced march of a criminal, was more like a triumphal procession. They next passed through Aricia (now La Riccia), sixteen miles from Rome, a spot still distinguished by some remnant of its ancient celebrity. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 222-224.

§ 647. **The Arrival in the Imperial City.** As they approached to Rome the suburbs were lined with the splendid villas of senators and knights, and wealthy commoners, and the tombs of the mighty dead. Just before reaching the gate of the city they passed under the arch of Drusus, erected twenty years before in honour of Drusus, the father of the Emperor Claudius, and who is celebrated by Horace as the conqueror of the Rhæti and Vindelici. The arch still remains, and the spectator gazes with the more interest as he remembers that under this venerable fabric passed 1800 years ago the footsteps of the great Apostle of the Gentiles. They now advanced into Rome itself by the Porta Capena, or Capuan gate, dripping with the leakage of the ancient aqueduct which was carried across it. The Apostle was now in the City of the Seven Hills, which for so many years had been the great object of his holy aspirations. He was there a prisoner, but no matter, he was at Rome, and we shall see that the cause of Christianity did not suffer by his chain. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 225-227.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 648. **The Coincidence of the Secular and the Religious.** One of the peculiarities of the 27th chapter of the Acts is that there is in it practically nothing of what people commonly call the "gospel." To be made "wise unto salvation" it is by no means essential that we should be occupied wholly with things religious to the neglect of the secular. The preaching that occupied Paul weeks or months is often passed over with hardly more than a mention, while the account of this voyage is fully given. We are taught thereby that religion includes the handling of a ship as well as a parish. There is no sharp distinction between the secular and the religious, but all the business of life is to be consecrated to the glory of God.

§ 649. **The Infallibility of God's Promises.** In Jerusalem soon after Paul's arrest the Lord had said to him, "As thou hast testified concerning me at Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome" (Acts 23: 11). Against this promise all adverse influences broke like waves on a granite cliff. The fierce rage of Paul's enemies could not reach him, the corruption of officials might delay but could not stop him, the wild tempest could not drown him, the battered and leaking ship could not go to pieces until it had borne him to the shore, the instinct of self-preservation in sailors or soldiers was overruled to his safety, the poisonous fangs of the viper could not hurt him. God had said that he should preach in Rome, and until this promise was accomplished Paul was immortal.

§ 650. **God's Promises Conditional.** Notwithstanding the divine assurance that all on board would be saved, Paul knew that the use of ordinary means and faithful perseverance in the path of duty was necessary to secure the end desired. He did not doubt God's ability to perform a miracle for their salvation, but he well knew that God works through natural means, supplementing them with divine power. For the answer to his prayers, the Christian should pray as if it all depended on God; and then work as if it all depended on himself.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PECULIARITIES OF ACTS, CHAP. 27: *Malleson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, pp. 548, 549. 2. ANCIENT NAVIGATION: *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 247, 248a. 3. SAILING VESSELS OF THE ANCIENTS: *Malleson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, pp. 551, 552. 4. JULIUS, CENTURION OF THE AUGUSTAN BAND: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 561, 562. 5. FELLOW-VOYAGERS OF THE APOSTLE: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 311. 6. ANCIENT MYRA: *Malleson*, Acts and Epistles of St. Paul, p. 554. 7. REASONS FOR ANCHORING FROM THE STERN: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 335-337; *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 494; *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, p. 254b. 8. THE ISLAND OF MELITA, OR MALTA: *Gloag*, Commentary, Acts, pp. 421, 422. 9. PUBLIUS, THE CHIEF MAN OF THE ISLAND: *Smith*, Voyage and Shipwreck of St. Paul, pp. 112-114; *Abbott*, Commentary, Acts, p. 258b.

Lesson 36. — PAUL A PRISONER IN ROME. The Word of God not Bound.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 651. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the beginning of Paul's ministry in Rome during his first imprisonment there as related in the closing chapter of

Luke's narrative; and to notice one of the results of that ministry as disclosed in the epistle to Philemon.

§ 652. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note the place and character of Paul's first imprisonment in Rome and his confinement within the prætorium, yet the liberty accorded him to be attended by his friends and associates, and to continue his work as fully and freely as the responsibility of the soldiers for his safe keeping would permit.

(2) Show how here, as in all other places, he begins his ministry by an appeal to his own countrymen, and how their rejection of the gospel opens the way for his work among the Gentiles.

(3) Recount the story of Onesimus, and indicate the light thrown by it upon Paul's imprisonment; show why Paul, who understood fully the evil of human slavery, sent this fugitive slave back to his master, instead of shielding him and denouncing Philemon for being a slave owner.

(4) Call attention to the literary character of the epistle sent to Philemon, its exquisite tact and courtesy, its self-renunciation and noble Christian spirit, and indicate what the epistle suggests in regard to the mental and moral traits of the writer himself.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PAUL'S FIRST INTERVIEW WITH THE JEWS IN ROME.

§ 653. **Paul a Prisoner at Rome.** Julius and his charge arrived at the Palace and delivered up his prisoners to the Prefect of the Prætorium. . . . The Prætorians consisted of nine or ten cohorts of 1000 men each. . . . One of the ten cohorts was always on duty at the Palace, the cohorts relieving each other according to a certain rota. The barrack of the cohort in attendance was within the Palatine, and thither prisoners from the provinces were consigned. . . . Some were coupled by a slight chain round the right wrist to the left of a soldier, and thus shackled, were allowed to be at large within the palace, or even, if they could afford it, were at liberty to hire a lodging for themselves without the walls, but within the rules or prescribed limits. Burrhus at this time was Prefect of the Prætorium, and to him Julius the centurion resigned the prisoners under his charge. — *Lewin*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 232, 234, 236.

§ 654. **Paul's Statement to the Roman Jews.** As soon as Paul had had the needful rest afforded by . . . three days of quietness, he pursued his invariable plan of addressing himself first to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Calling, therefore, the leading men of the Jews together, as it would appear within the Prætorium, for we have no reason to think that he would be permitted to attend the synagogue service, he there addressed them. His first care would be to endeavour to free himself from that suspicion with which they might very possibly regard him, seeing him arrive as a prisoner bound with a chain. "Brethren, I have committed nothing against our people, nothing against the customs of our fathers. . . . I am bound with this chain only for clinging to the realized hope of the Messiah in which all Israel unite." — *Malleon*: St. Paul, pp. 583, 584.

§ 655. **The Jews' Answer to Paul.** (1) *That they Had Heard Nothing from Jerusalem against him.*—This statement refers to their having received no official information, either written or oral, in regard to the circumstances under which Paul had been sent to Rome. Some have supposed the Jews to be insincere in this declaration, as if it was improbable that they should have been uninformed in regard to so important an event. But we have no sufficient reason for calling in question their veracity. The Palestine Jews could hardly have foreseen the issue to which the case was so suddenly brought; and hence, before the apostle's appeal, would have deemed it unnecessary to apprise the Jews at Rome of the progress of the trial. It is barely possible that they could have forwarded intelligence since the appeal had taken place. Paul departed for Italy evidently soon after he had appealed, and must have availed himself of one of the last opportunities for such a voyage which the season of the year allowed. Having spent the winter at Melita, he had proceeded to Rome at the earliest moment in the spring; so that in the ordinary course of things he must have arrived there in advance of any ship that might have left Palestine after the reopening of navigation. — *Hackett*: Commentary, Acts, p. 457.

(2) *That Christians were everywhere Spoken against.*—The Christians of Rome had obviously, even if they were Jews, withdrawn from the Jewish quarter, and the residents in that quarter knew of them only by reports. What was the nature of those reports we can only conjecture. They were, as the speakers say, "everywhere spoken against." The darker calumnies which were propagated afterwards—stories of Thyestean (*i.e.*, cannibal) banquets and licentious orgies—may possibly have been even then whispered from ear to ear. In any case the Christians of the empire would be known as abandoning circumcision and other Jewish ordinances, leading a separate life, holding meetings which were more or less secret, worshiping One who had been crucified as a malefactor. They were already, as Tacitus describes them, speaking of their sufferings under Nero, known as holding "a detestable superstition," guilty of "atrocious and shameful crimes, convicted by the hatred of mankind," or as Suetonius writes as "a race of men holding a new and criminal superstition." — *Plumptre*: In Handy Commentary, Acts, pp. 434*b*, 435*a*.

PAUL PREACHING IN PRISON.

§ 656. **The Gospel Rejected by the Jews, but not Opposed.** The Jewish council gave him a hearing; when St. Paul followed exactly the same lines as in the synagogue at Antioch of Pisidia and in his speech before Agrippa. He pointed out the gradual development of God's purposes in the law and the prophets, showing how they had all been fulfilled in Jesus Christ. It was with the Jews at Rome as with the Jews elsewhere. Some believed and some believed not as Paul preached unto them. The meeting was much more one for discussion than for addresses. From morning till evening the disputation continued, till at last the Apostle dismissed them with the stern words of the Prophet Isaiah, taken from the sixth chapter of his prophecy, where he depicts the hopeless state of those who obstinately close their ears to the voice of conviction. But the Jews of Rome do not seem to have been like those of Thessalonica, Ephesus, Corinth, and Jerusalem in one respect. They did not actively oppose St. Paul or attempt to silence him by violent means. — *Stokes*: Acts, vol. ii, pp. 470, 471.

§ 657. **Paul's Two Years' Ministry in Rome.** Under the care of Burrus [see § 653], Paul was lodged somewhere in the Prætorium, within the spacious lines occupied by the imperial guard, and an apartment was allotted to him, which he occupied by himself alone, or as often as he chose to be alone; but always

with a soldier attached to him by the chain that never ceased to remind him that he was a prisoner of the Lord. And as this guard required to be continually changed, in all probability daily, it may easily be conceived how many of the rude soldiers of the Prætorian Guard, listening daily to the teaching of the Apostle, would imbibe some of the spirit of Christianity, carry it to their comrades, and make it more or less a matter of light or serious talk, of deep or of trivial reflection. This and many other facilities offered him by a position otherwise irksome illustrates his statement that "my bonds became manifest in Christ throughout the whole Prætorian Guard, and to all the rest;" and the greeting "all the saints salute you, especially they that are of Cæsar's household."—*Malleon* : St. Paul, pp. 582, 583.

§ 658. **The Abrupt Ending of the Acts.** (1) It appears to me more easy to account for it on the supposition that these two years of imprisonment were followed by a period of renewed activity, into the details of which the writer did not propose to enter, than on the supposition that they terminated in a violent death, to which he could easily have referred in a single line. We are inclined therefore to accept, as the more probable, the idea that the Apostle was set free, and was thus enabled to renew his labours for the good of the Church either in the East or West. — *Godet* : Studies on the Epistles, pp. 267, 268.

(2) The history closes somewhat abruptly. It may have been the intention of the writer to continue his narrative. It is a natural inference that when he closed it the two years had expired, or were on the point of expiring; that he, who had remained with the Apostle during his imprisonment, started with him on his eastward journey afterwards; and that some incidents, to us unknown, hindered him from completing the work which he had begun. It is possible, on the other hand, that Theophilus, as an Italian convert, may have known what had passed in Rome during the Apostle's first sojourn there, or subsequently, and that St. Luke did not aim at more than setting before his friend the stages by which St. Paul had been brought to the imperial city. — *Plumptre* : In Handy Commentary, p. 437b.

THE EPISTLE TO PHILEMON.

§ 659. **Philemon. His Residence, and his Relation to Paul.** Philemon, the master of Onesimus, as tradition relates, was a native of Laodicea, but dwelt at Colossæ. In the latter city he was a fellow-laborer of Paul, though in what relation we are not told, and stood at the head of a Christian congregation in his own house (vs. 2). If we conclude from vs. 19 that he also had been brought into the church by the preaching of Paul, we must suppose this took place during the Apostle's abode at Ephesus, since Paul was not personally known to the church at Colossæ; see Col. 2 : 1, and comp. Col. 1 : 3-7. — *Van Oosterzee* : In Lange's Commentary, Philemon, p. 5.

§ 660. **Onesimus.** (1) *His Relation to Philemon.*—The manner in which Paul speaks of the relation between Philemon and Onesimus, the coloring of his language so evidently suggested by that relation, and the unvarying tradition on the subject, are all without an adequate explanation, unless we admit that the two men were related to each other as master and slave. On this point not only the ancient commentators, but nearly all of any critical weight among the modern, agree in their decision. In Phrygia, where Onesimus lived, slaves were so numerous that the name itself of Phrygian was almost synonymous with that of slave. — *Hackett* : In Lange's Commentary, Philemon, p. 4.

(2) *His Wrong-doing, and Flight to Rome.*—What was the wrongdoing which had caused Onesimus to run away? The Apostle refers to it in vs. 18,

The expressions used do not necessarily imply that the fugitive slave had committed a theft. They may be explained on the supposition that he had been guilty of culpable negligence which had brought serious loss on his master. However this may be, it was the fear of well-merited punishment which had caused Onesimus to run away. — *Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, p. 224.

(3) *His Conversion*. — Whether feeling his loneliness, or wearied with a life of vice, or impoverished and reduced to want, or seized with the fear of detection, he made his way to Paul. . . . And as he stepped out of the coarse debauchery and profanity of the crowded resorts of the metropolis into the room hallowed by the presence of Paul, he saw the foulness of the one life and the beauty of the other, and was persuaded to accept the gospel he had often heard in his master's house. How long he remained with Paul does not appear, but long enough to impress on the Apostle's mind that this slave was no common man. Paul had devoted and active friends by him, but this slave, trained to watch his master's wants and to execute promptly all that was entrusted to him, became almost indispensable to Paul. But to retain him, Paul feels, would be to steal him, or at any rate to deprive Philemon of the pleasure of voluntarily sending him to minister to him. He therefore sends him back with this letter so exquisitely worded that it cannot but have secured the forgiveness and cordial reception of Onesimus. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., p. 149.

§ 661. *Epistle to Philemon*. (1) *Time and Place of its Composition*. — The Epistle was written some years earlier than the pastoral Epistles. . . . The Apostle, at the close of the letter to Philemon, expresses a hope of his own speedy liberation. He speaks in like manner of his approaching deliverance in his Epistle to the Philippians, which was written during the same imprisonment at Rome. Presuming, therefore, that he had good reasons for such an expectation, and that he was not disappointed in the result, we may conclude that this letter was written by him about the year A.D. 63. — *Hackett*: In Lange's Commentary, Philemon, p. 4.

On the reasons for possibly dating this epistle, together with Colossians and Ephesians, from Paul's imprisonment in Cæsarea rather than at Rome, see *Meyer*: Commentary, Ephesians, pp. 300, 301. The opinion of most commentators is, however, that these epistles were written from Rome.

(2) *Its Literary Character*. — This Epistle to Philemon has one peculiar feature — its *æsthetic character*, we may term it — which distinguishes it from all the other Epistles of Paul, and demands a special notice at our hands. It has been admired deservedly as a model of delicacy and skill in the department of composition to which it belongs. The writer had peculiar difficulties to overcome. He was the common friend of the parties at variance. He must conciliate a man who supposed that he had good reason to be offended. He must commend the offender and yet neither deny nor aggravate the imputed fault. He must assert the new ideas of Christian equality in the face of a system which hardly recognized the humanity of the enslaved.

He could have placed the question on the ground of his own personal rights, and yet must waive them in order to secure an act of spontaneous kindness. His success must be a triumph of love, and nothing be demanded for the sake of justice which could have claimed everything. He limits his request to a forgiveness of the alleged wrong, and a restoration to favor and the enjoyment of future sympathy and affection, and yet would so guard his words as to leave scope for all the generosity which benevolence might prompt towards one whose condition admitted of so much alleviation. These are contraries not easy to harmonize; but Paul, it is confessed, has shown a degree of self-denial and a tact in dealing

with them, which, in being equal to the occasion, could not well be greater. — *Hackett*: In Lange's Commentary, Philemon, p. 7.

[It pursues its aim with] so much Christian love and wisdom, with so great psychological tact, and, without sacrifice of the apostolic authority, in a manner so thoughtfully condescending, adroit, delicate, and irresistible, that the brief letter — which is in the finest sense a "speech seasoned with salt," as a most precious and characteristic relic of the great apostle — belongs, even as regards its Attic refinement and gracefulness, to the epistolary master-pieces of antiquity. — *Meyer*: Commentary, Philemon, p. 396.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 662. **Opportunity by Limitation.** Paul's imprisonment greatly broadened the sphere of his influence in Rome. By this means he was brought in contact with sailors, soldiers and their officers, "they of Cæsar's household," and the great numbers who visited the prætorian guard. He was also given an opportunity to write the Epistles of the Captivity. So to-day, the Christian often finds that what seems like limitation means enlargement of his sphere of usefulness.

§ 663. **The Resistless Progress of the Gospel.** In less than three centuries the proudly uplifted silver eagles of those Roman legionaries to whom Paul their prisoner preached were supplanted by the cross — the detested badge of the slave's torture and the malefactor's death. That the gospel had not been shorn of its ancient power is witnessed in our day by the rise at home of such agencies as the Salvation Army and the various Young People's Societies, and on the foreign field by the colossal expansion of missionary enterprises.

§ 664. **Christianity and Human Slavery.** Human slavery, almost universal in the first century, was no less a crime then than in the nineteenth. Why did neither Christ nor the New Testament writers lift up their voices in denunciation of it? Because, instead of expending their strength in what would then have been useless condemnation of the evil, they adopted the much wiser course of disseminating principles that would effectually undermine it. Wherever Christianity has carried its exalted conceptions of God and man and their mutual relations, slavery has gone down never to rise again.

§ 665. **The Limits of Sacred History.** The object of the book of the Acts apparently was to narrate the progress of the gospel from Jerusalem to Rome; this done the book ends, leaving innumerable points of vast interest untouched. But this is characteristic of the Bible, since it concerns itself only with the progress of the kingdom of God in the world. Questions in history, science, philosophy and religion possess no interest for it except as they stand related to this main purpose, which some one has defined to be, "Teaching men how to go to heaven; not how the heavens go."

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE IMPERIAL CITY: *Shumway*, A Day in Ancient Rome.
2. LONDON IN THE TIME OF ST. PAUL: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 244, 245.
3. THE JEWISH COMMUNITY IN ROME: *Conybeare and Howson*: Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 368-372.
4. SLAVERY IN ANCIENT ROME: *Ibid.*, pp. 367, 368.
5. CHRISTIANITY AND SLAVERY: *Schaff*, History of the Apostolic Church, pp. 454-460.
6. ST. PAUL AND SENECA: *Lightfoot*, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, pp. 268-331.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE

THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

**Lesson 37.—ERRORS IN THE COLOSSIAN CHURCH. The
Supremacy of Christ Endangered by False Philosophy.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 666. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the nature of the errors that threatened to destroy the peace and prosperity of the churches in and around Colosse, and how Paul, when informed of the situation, met it in his epistle to the Colossians.

§ 667. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Gather what information is at hand concerning the origin, probable composition, and character of the Colossian church.

(2) Note what is said in the Library Extracts (§ 669) about the authorship of the epistle, and about its date, occasion and purpose.

(3) Get a clear conception of the fundamental principles of the Gnostic heresy (see Library Extracts, § 670), of which the Colossian errors seem to have been incipient manifestations; then read the epistle carefully, and notice how thoughts of these errors give color and meaning to the apostle's language throughout.

(4) Show how Paul met these errors, not by direct exposure and condemnation, but by exhibiting the true relation of Christ to the universe and to the church; and how he declared that all the advantages promised to those who embraced these errors, and many others, were actually realized in fellowship with Christ.

(5) In conclusion state clearly Paul's exalted conception of Christ's nature and work as revealed in this epistle; then show that the Christ of Paul is the Christ of to-day, and that every departure from the revelation contained in the Bible leads not to greater light and wisdom, but to human folly and eternal loss.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS.

§ 668. **The Church at Colosse.** Colossæ, situated on the river Lycus, in southwestern Phrygia, but within the Roman proconsular province of Asia, had in earlier times been a large and populous city, but was considerably reduced at the date of this letter, possibly owing to the rivalry of its prosperous neighbours Laodicea and Hierapolis, which lay a few miles farther down the river. The only feature of the population which throws light on the epistle is its very considerable

Jewish ingredient. Two thousand Jewish families had been transplanted by Antiochus the Great, and had been settled in Lydia and Phrygia; and [considering the Oriental features of the Gnostic heresy] it is important to observe that these families had been brought from Babylonia and Mesopotamia. Other influences increased the Jewish population until in Paul's time they formed a distinctly influential element in the towns of Phrygia. . . .

Apparently they had received the gospel through Epaphras, who was himself a Colossian, and probably was one of those who heard Paul preach at Ephesus in the school of Tyrannus, and who spread the knowledge of the Lord Jesus among "all them which dwelt in Asia." Epaphras had joined Paul in Rome, and had given him a vivid idea of the progress and of the dangers of the Christian Churches in the valley of the Lycus. Teachers had appeared in Colossæ, who were confusing the minds of the converts not yet "stablished in the faith." — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 137, 138.

§ 669. **The Epistle to the Colossians:** (1) *Authorship*. — There does not seem to have been any doubt in the ancient Church as to the Pauline authorship of the Epistle; and if the evidence that has come down to us is something short of conclusive, it is at least distinctly favourable to the traditional hypothesis. . . . It is sufficient to say that as soon as we find traces of a collection of St. Paul's Epistles, the Epistle to the Colossians certainly had a place among them, and in no quarter of the ancient world does it appear that this place was questioned. — *Sanday*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Colossians, Epistle to the," p. 624*b*.

(2) *Time and Place of Writing*. — By similarity of language and matter the epistle to the Colossians is intimately connected with that to the Ephesians; and the notices of St Paul's companions, and of Onesimus and Archippus, which occur in the epistle to Philemon, show that this last epistle was also written and sent at the same time as the other two. The epistle to the Philippians belongs to the same group, and the most probable view is that it was from Rome that all four were written by Paul, "the prisoner of Jesus Christ." Some critics . . . contend that at least three of the epistles [Philemon, Colossians and Ephesians] were written from Cæsarea; but the traditional view that all four were written from Rome is supported by most modern writers, and is freest from difficulties. The date of the epistle to the Colossians may be placed about 62 or 63 A.D. — *Smith*: In Ency. Brit., vol. vi, Art., "Colossians, Epistle to the," p. 164*a*.

(3) *Occasion of the Epistle*. — The Epistle seems to have been called forth by the information St. Paul had received from Epaphras, who, if not the actual founder of the Church of Colossæ, was certainly one of the very earliest preachers of Christ in that city. . . . Its *object* transpires very clearly, — an earnest desire on the part of the apostle to warn the Colossians against a system of false teaching, partly Oriental and theosophistic in its character, and partly Judaical and ceremonial, which was tending on the one hand directly to obscure the majesty and glory of Christ, and on the other, to introduce ritualistic observances, especially on the side of bodily austerities, opposed alike to the simplicity and freedom of the gospel, and to all true and vital union with the risen Lord. — *Ellicott*: Commentary, Colossians, Int., p. 119.

(4) *Aim of the Epistle*. — Paul does not aim at exploding the incipient heresy by argument. He contents himself with showing that all that was advantageous or attractive in the new doctrine existed already in Christ, and existed in Him not in appearance but in truth. To the attractiveness of being initiated into mysteries and esoteric doctrines to which none but the select few were admitted, he opposes his ministry of a gospel free from all intellectual exclusiveness, which he preaches

to "every creature," "warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." — *Dods* : Introduction, New Test., p. 144.

THE SUPREMACY AND SOLE MEDIATORSHIP OF CHRIST.

§ 670. **The Gnostic Heresy.** The system of the Gnostics was compounded of many heterogeneous ingredients. From the Platonic school it drew the doctrine of Ideas, namely that all created things had their archetypes in the Divine mind, and had thence received their impression. The cabbalistic fables of the Jews, with their legions of angels and ceremonial observances, furnished another and large contribution; and from the oriental Philosophy was borrowed the notion of two independent co-eternal principles, God and Matter, the one the author of Good, and the other of Evil. Lastly, to this strange mixture was added no inconsiderable portion of Christianity, into which Gnosticism had been imported by the father of heresy, Simon Magus.

The fanciful scheme, as finally elaborated, was this — God dwelt from all Eternity in a Plentitude of inaccessible Light, and beyond this Plentitude lay Matter originally in a chaotic state, and intrinsically evil. In the course of time, God, called Bythos or Depth, by acting upon his own Mind called Sige or Silence, produced two other beings of different sexes, denominated Æons or Emanations; and from these two, by successive descents, sprang a series of other Æons. It may readily be imagined that when the human intellect attempted by its own efforts to trace the celestial pedigree, there arose infinite disputations as to the number of Æons, and the order of their procession. It was against these idle speculations that the Apostle so earnestly warned Timothy and Titus. "Neither give heed to *fables and endless genealogies*, which minister questions rather than *godly edifying* which is in faith." "Avoid *foolish questions, and genealogies, and contentions, and strivings about the law*, for they are unprofitable and vain."

It would be a waste of time to set forth in detail the theory of these Divine Intelligences. But, according to the genealogy more commonly received, Bythos was the pre-existent eternal principle, and from him and Sige or Silence, fourteen other pairs of Æons, male and female, emanated. . . . One of the subsequent Æons, and the author of all mischief, was Demiurgus, or the Creator. The last pair of Æons were Christ and the Holy Spirit. . . . Some held that Jesus and Christ were two persons — Jesus, who was flesh and blood, and Christ, the Æon, who descended upon Jesus at his baptism, and parted from him at his crucifixion. Others maintained that Jesus Christ was a phantom, and had no real or substantial existence. John, who wrote when the Gnostic heresy was at its height, is constantly pressing upon his converts that Jesus Christ was one and the same person, flesh and blood like other men, and at the same time the Son of God. — *Lewin* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 249–251.

§ 671. **Paul's Conception of the Person and Work of Christ.** (1) *Christ the Visible Manifestation of God, the One Mediator in Earth and Heaven.* — To sum up the Christology of the epistle to the Colossians: Christ is the image of the invisible God; that is to say, the visible manifestation of God's invisible essence. He is, from the metaphysical point of view, the essential Mediator between God and the world. It is through Him that God imparts Himself to the world, and that the world returns to God. . . .

To comprehend these statements fully, we must admit the controversial aim which already begins to appear. The apostle seeks to give Christ supremacy in all things, so that His dignity shall not be diminished nor His glory eclipsed in the hierarchy of æons set up between God and the world. Christ is not a single æon, one of a crowd — not a part of things — but the *fullness*. From Him the whole

series of celestial and terrestrial beings derive their life: to Him they must ever return, if they would not be separated from God. Paul knows but one Mediator in earth and heaven. The work of mediation and universal reconciliation is not a collective work; the apostle does not suffer it to be shared. Redemption is the work of the Crucified. In Him alone God reconciles all things. It is by the blood of His cross that peace has been made in the visible and invisible universe. — *Sabatier*: Apostle Paul, pp. 242-244.

(2) *Christ the One through Whom All Things were Made, and the Head of All Things*. — St. Paul finds in Christ the fundamental principle of the creation. For those who think with him, God had by the Christian revelation already brought all things to their unity. This summing up — the Christian inventory and recapitulation of the universe — the apostle has formally stated in Colossians 1: 15-20: "Christ is God's image and creation firstborn. In Him, through Him, for Him all things were made. He is before them all; and in Him they have their basis and uniting bond. He is equally the Head of the Church and the new creation, the firstborn out of the dead, that He might hold a universal presidency — charged with all the fulness, so that in Him is the ground of the reconciliation no less than of the creation of all things in heaven and earth." — *Findlay*: Ephesians, pp. 46, 47.

WARNINGS AGAINST FALSE PHILOSOPHY.

§ 672. *Errors of the Gnostic Heresy*. (1) *Errors in Principle*. — The philosophy against which he would put the Colossians on their guard is false in two aspects. First, in its origin. It does not confine itself to reintroducing the ordinances of Moses, but enforces also the arbitrary and purely human prescriptions which had been added by the rabbis. . . . Then this philosophy is false as to its *substance*. It connects salvation with external rights of a material nature [circumcision, etc.], without relation to the moral life of man. — *Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, pp. 179, 180.

(2) *Worship of Angels*. — In the opinion of the Jews, the Gentiles were under the sway of diabolic powers, the angels of darkness, to whom the idolatrous worship was offered. How could they be delivered from the dominion of these maleficent spirits? There could be but one way of escape; to place themselves under the leading of the angels of light, who alone could vanquish these unseen enemies of man. But for this end these heavenly spirits must be propitiated by scrupulous obedience to their precepts and by the worship which was their due. — *Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, pp. 168, 169.

§ 673. *These Errors Contrasted with the Work of Christ*. Not so with the true gospel, the wisdom of which is "after Christ." This Paul shows when he sets forth all the fulness of that salvation which is given us in the person and by the work of Christ [1: 14-20; 2: 9-15]. . . . All the *fulness* of life and of Divine perfection dwells in Christ under a bodily form; if then we are united to Him we have all fulness in Him, and have no need to seek anything from those principalities and powers [the angels], of whom He is Himself the Head [2: 9, 10]. The consecration which the Jew received through the circumcision of the flesh, the Colossians received in a more excellent way, through baptism, which by uniting them to the death and resurrection of Christ, made them die inwardly to sin and live again in Him with a new life [2: 11-13]. What folly to wish after that to bring them back to circumcision! Who would circumcise a man who had died and risen again? — *Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, p. 180.

§ 674. *Characteristics and Results of the New Life in Christ*. There are three characteristics of this new life possessed in Christ — the forgiveness of

sins, which the old sacrifices could never procure; freedom from the threatenings of the law — the handwriting which God has Himself annulled, nailing it to the cross of Christ; lastly, deliverance from the power of the evil spirits [principalities and powers] which ruled the pagan world, but which were despoiled by Christ of their power and glory, He triumphing openly over them in His cross [2: 13-15]. The first of these verses shows the reason for the abolition of ceremonial worship; the second shows the uselessness, as far as the believer is concerned, of all legal institutions; the third is intended to free the believer from all superstitious fear of the maleficent power of the angels of darkness. As he has nothing to seek from the good angels, so he has nothing to dread from the bad. . . .

The new teachers enjoin the worshipping of angels; they dazzle the Christians with the suggestion of new revelations to be obtained through these celestial spirits. They pretend to have access to a higher world by visions which are only the effect of carnal excitement (2: 18); and they do not cherish the union with the glorified Christ, that Head of the body who alone imparts a power of vital growth to all the members (2: 19). But, says Paul, *you* who have been raised together with Christ, are no longer under the dominion of material elements. Your spiritual life no longer depends on the things you touch, taste, and handle. . . . Being once risen with Christ you have but one thing to do, to live as men raised from the death of sin, seeking only those things which are above in that higher world in which you already live with Christ, while awaiting your own manifestation with Him in glory (3: 1-4). — *Godet: Studies on the Epistles*, pp. 180-182.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 675. **Human Speculations no Substitute for Revealed Truth.** As at Colosse, so in all subsequent ages, man's philosophy has vainly tried to take the place of the simple gospel. The natural man rebels against accepting salvation as God has provided it, and would gladly introduce what he fancies is some improvement of his own. But as at Colosse, so always, the "improvement" is worthless; God's truth alone remains sure.

§ 676. **The Service of Error to Truth.** The influence of error is not altogether bad. Error always acts as a powerful stimulus to the defense of truth, and in the end commonly results in the restatement of the truth in such terms that the particular form of error in question is thenceforth practically dead. But for the errors of the Judaizers, the church would not have possessed the epistle to the Galatians; but for the incipient Gnostic heresy at Colosse, Paul's magnificent presentation of Christ's divinity as given in the Colossian epistle would not have been made.

§ 677. **Christ Greatest to those who Love Him Most.** To those who, like Paul and John, have come into the closest personal relations to Christ, his relation to God is most apparent, since an intimate knowledge of Christ as a personal Saviour is the medium through which his divine personality is most clearly revealed.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE CITY OF COLOSSE: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Colosse." 2. THE COLOSSIAN HERESY: *Moorhouse*, Dangers of the Apostolic Age, pp. 113-168; *Godet*, Studies on the Epistles, pp. 172-174. 3. BELIEFS OF THE ESENEES: *Ibid.*, pp. 170-172. 4. THE ANGELS AND THE LAW: *Ibid.*, pp. 176, 177. 5. PAUL'S THEORY OF HUMAN LIFE IN OPPOSITION TO Gnostic ASCETICISM: *Sabatier*, Apostle Paul, pp. 248, 249.

Lesson 38. — JEWS AND GENTILES MADE ONE IN CHRIST.
Paul's Defense of the Unity of the Church.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 678. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how Paul, in a circular letter addressed especially to Gentiles in Ephesus and vicinity, set forth the great truth that Gentiles are included equally with Jews in God's eternal purpose of grace in Christ, and that in him both are united into one as alike constituent and essential parts of his body, the church.

§ 679. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note the close relation between this epistle and that to the Colossians, with the probable reasons for it; also the difficulty of determining decisively to whom it was addressed, with the probability in favor of its being a circular letter. Note also its high literary and spiritual character.

(2) Call attention to the fact that while no one knows certainly the order in which the epistles to the Colossians and to the Ephesians were written, yet, since the latter seems to follow logically as a development of the leading thought in the former, it was probably written last.

(3) State the apostle's theme in the epistle; and show its exceeding fitness in a circular letter addressed to churches composed of Jews and Gentiles, Greeks and barbarians, bond and free, among whom occasions for the display of national or religious arrogance were sure to present themselves with painful frequency.

(4) Dwell especially upon Paul's thought that according to God's eternal purpose Jews and Gentiles were constituent and therefore essential elements in the church; that one cannot claim precedence over the other, and that each owes all the blessings and privileges enjoyed in this new relation entirely to the free and unmerited grace of God.

(5) Show Paul's conception of the meaning of his divine call to become the apostle to the Gentiles, namely, that through him might be proclaimed to the world this fact of the essential unity of Jews and Gentiles in Christ, a fact which had remained from the beginning a hidden mystery, but had now been revealed that it might be recognized as a vital principle in the body of Christ.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS.

§ 680. **The Epistle to the Ephesians.** (1) *Occasion.* — The thoughts which had been stirred by the danger in Colossæ had clearly an importance for a much wider and more influential circle than could be touched even if the Colossians were diligently to circulate their own Epistle among their neighbours in the little Phrygian valley of the Lycus, both in Laodicea and Hierapolis. And further, there were some elements in the conception of the place which the Church, by virtue of her organic connexion with the Christ, occupies in relation to the whole counsel of God, that could not be fully developed in the stir and stress of controversy. Accordingly St. Paul sends by the same messenger a second letter, in

which he expounds in detail the work which the Church has been elected to perform in the world and the relation in which the various members stand one to another in the unity of the body. — *Murray*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 78a.

(2) *A Circular Letter*. — The letter was not, according to the true text (Eph. 1: 1, R. V. marg.), addressed exclusively to any particular Church. It seems to have been, like the First Epistle of St. Peter and the Revelation, in some sort a circular letter carried round by its bearer from Church to Church in Asia Minor. For instance, it is probable that this is the letter which the Colossians are to expect from Laodicea (Col. 4: 16). [In Marcion's canon, made A.D. 140, it is called the epistle to the Laodiceans, showing that a copy of it must have been in Laodicea at that time.] In any case the Church at Ephesus must have been the most important of the Churches to which it was sent, and the centre from which copies of it would be most freely circulated; and so it may not unnaturally have been regarded as in a special sense addressed to that Church. — *Murray*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 78a.

(3) *Subject, the Unity of the Church*. — For a circular letter no subject could be more appropriate than the unity of the Church. Unity is the key to this epistle: the unity of the Church with God, the unity of the two great sections of the Christian Church, and the unity of the members of the Church Catholic. "In Christ all things, both which are in heaven and which are in earth, are gathered together in one" (1: 10). This is God's eternal purpose, hid from former ages (3: 5), but now made known (3: 5, 9). To reconcile all things to God — that is the purpose which has in all ages been running on to fulfilment. In this purpose men are included, "chosen in Christ to be holy" (1: 4), "predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself," received into the closest and truest fellowship with God.

Through Christ this purpose of God is fulfilled, for as in the *Epistle to the Colossians* he had said that "in Christ dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily," so now he says that as Christ is as it were the body and fulness of God, the Church is "Christ's body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all" (1: 23). In reconciling Jew and Gentile alike to God, he has reconciled them to one another, "making of twain *one* new man" (2: 15) and giving "both access through *one* spirit unto the Father." In order to come into this reconciliation with God, and be "filled with all the fulness of God" (3: 19), Christ must dwell in the heart by faith till the sovereignty and dominion of His love over all things be in some measure understood (3: 17-20). — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 123, 124.

(4) *Literary and Religious Character*. — Grotius says St. Paul here equals the sublimity of his thoughts with words more sublime than any human tongue has ever uttered. Luther reckoned it among the noblest books of the New Testament. Witsius calls it a divine Epistle glowing with the flame of Christian love, and the splendour of holy light, and flowing with fountains of living water. Coleridge said of it, "In this, the divinest composition of man, is every doctrine of Christianity: first, those doctrines peculiar to Christianity; and secondly, those precepts common to it with natural religion." Lastly, Alford calls it "the greatest and most heavenly work of one whose very imagination is peopled with things in the heavens, and even his fancy rapt into the visions of God." — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 632.

GOD'S ETERNAL PURPOSE IN CHRIST.

§ 681. The Introduction to the Epistle. (1) *The Gateway of Praise*. — We enter this epistle through a magnificent gateway. The introductory Act of

Praise, extending from verse 3 to 14, is one of the most sublime of inspired utterances, an overture worthy of the composition that it introduces. Its first sentence compels us to feel the insufficiency of our powers for its due rendering.

The apostle surveys in this thanksgiving the entire course of the revelation of grace. Standing with the men of his day, the new-born community of the sons of God in Christ, midway between the ages past and to come, he looks backward to the source of man's salvation when it lay a silent thought in the mind of God, and forward to the hour when it shall have accomplished its promise and achieved our redemption. . . . The theme of the entire composition is given in verse 3. . . .

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ: who hath blessed us, In every blessing of the spirit, in the heavenly places, in Christ." . . .

With wondering love and joy unspeakable St. Paul pronounced this *Benedictus*. God was not less to him the Almighty, the High and Holy One dwelling in eternity, than in the days of his youthful Jewish faith; but the Eternal and All-holy One was now his Father in Jesus Christ. Blessed be His name: and let the whole earth be filled with his glory! — *Findlay*: Ephesians, pp. 21-24.

(2) *The Election of Grace*.—Here [vss. 4-6] is St. Paul's first chapter of Genesis. *In the beginning was the election of grace*. There is nothing unprepared, nothing unforeseen in God's dealings with mankind. . . . When he says that God "chose us in Christ *before the foundation of the world*"—or *before founding the world*—this is not a mere mark of time. It intimates that in laying His plans for the world the Creator had the purpose of redeeming grace in view. The kingdom which the "blessed children" of the Father of Christ "inherit" is the kingdom "*prepared for them from the foundation of the world*" (Mt. 25: 34). Salvation lies as deep as creation. The provision for it is eternal. For the universe of being was conceived, fashioned, and built up "in Christ." . . .

The purpose of this loving fore-ordination of believing men in Christ is two-fold; it concerns at once their *character* and their *state*: "He chose us out—that we should be holy and without blemish in His sight," and "unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ for Himself." These two purposes are one. God's sons must be holy; and holy men are His sons. For this end "we" were elected of God in the beginning. Nay, with this end in view the world was founded and the human race came into being, to provide God with such sons and that Christ might be "the first-born among many brethren" (Rom. 8: 28-30). — *Findlay*: Ephesians, pp. 25-27, 29, 30.

§ 682. *The Revelation of the Mystery of God's Purpose in Christ* (Eph. 1: 9, 10). God formed in Christ the purpose, by the dispensation of His grace, in due time to re-unite the universe under the headship of Christ. This mysterious design, hitherto kept secret, He has "Made known unto us." Its manifestation imparts a wisdom that surpasses all the wisdom of former ages. . . .

The Messianic end was to Paul's Jewish thought the dénouement of antecedent history. How long this age would continue, into what epochs it might unfold itself, he knew not; but for him the fulness of the times had arrived. The Son of God was come; the kingdom of God was amongst men. It was the beginning of the end. It is a mistake to relegate this text to the dim and distant future, to some far-off consummation. We are in the midst of the Christian reconstruction of things, and are taking part in it. The decisive epoch fell when "God sent forth His Son." All that has followed, and will follow, is the result of this mission. Christ is all things, and in all; and we are already complete in Him. . . .

The "gathering into one" of . . . [vs. 10] signifies . . . the rectification and adjustment of the several parts of the great whole of things, bringing them into

full accord with each other and with their Creator's will. . . . In a word, the organization of the universe upon a Christian basis. This reconstitution of things is provided for and is being effected "in the Christ." He is the rallying point of the forces of peace and blessing. The organic principle, the organizing Head, the creative nucleus of the new creation is there. The potent germ of life eternal has been introduced into the world's chaos; and its victory over the elements of disorder and death is assured. — *Findlay*: Ephesians, pp. 45-47.

THE GENTILES MADE PARTAKERS OF GOD'S GRACE IN CHRIST.

§ 683. **Jews and Gentiles Quickened by Christ.** But for whom were these great privileges predestined, and how were they bestowed? The full answer is contained in [Eph., chapter 2]. . . . They were intended for all, both Jews and Gentiles, and were bestowed by free grace. In this section the leading conception is the unity of mankind, in the heavenlies, in Christ. The Gentiles had been dead in transgressions and sins, absorbed in the temporal and the external, showing by their disobedience the influence of the Prince of the power of the air; and the Jews, too, had been occupied with the desires of the flesh, doing the determinations of the flesh, and the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath even as the rest; but God in His rich love and mercy quickened both Jews and Gentiles together, while still dead in their transgressions, and raised them together, and seated them together in the heavenlies in Christ Jesus — a name that occurs in verse after verse, being at the very heart of the Apostle's thoughts. The instrumental cause of this great salvation is solely free grace, applied by faith, that this grace might be manifested to the coming ages in all its surpassing wealth of kindness; and that we, thus created anew in Christ, and so prevented from any boast that we achieved by good works our own salvation, might still walk in good works, to which God predestined us. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, p. 638.

JEWES AND GENTILES UNITED IN CHRIST.

§ 684. **Made One Body in Christ.** The Apostle now comes to the principal point on which he wishes specially to insist with those to whom he was writing. Who were you, he says, you whom God has thus dealt with, whom He has raised like Christ Himself, from death to life, from the grave to the throne? Were you aforesaid among His covenanted people? Had you any part in the promises? Nay, ye were "aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope." Nevertheless God has brought even these Gentiles nigh to Himself by the blood of the cross, and has made them His people. He has broken down for them the wall of separation, the law, which rose between them and the Jews, and has thus brought together in one body these two races — till now so bitterly hostile — the Jews and the Gentiles.

In thus reconciling both unto Himself and abolishing the enmity, He "has made in Himself of twain one new man, so making peace." He gives to both access to the throne of grace on equal terms. So far then from being any more strangers, they are "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God," and are built up like living stones into the spiritual temple, founded upon Christ and His Apostles, to be a habitation of God through the Spirit. — *Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, pp. 204, 205.

THE PREACHING OF THIS UNITY COMMITTED TO PAUL.

§ 685. **Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles.** Such is the greatness of the grace of which they are the subjects. St. Paul adds yet one more point which concerns him personally. In order to effect this incorporation of the Gentiles into

the kingdom of God, there must be the creation of a new apostolate in addition to that of the twelve. This apostolate extraordinary is that with which Paul, the writer of this Epistle, and now a prisoner, has been invested. Unto him, who accounted himself "less than the least of all saints, was this grace given," that he "should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ"; and that he should make all men see that the Gentiles were fellow-heirs, fellow-members of the body, and partakers of the "promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel."

He entreats them therefore not to be troubled by the tribulations he has to endure for so great a cause, which are a glory and not a shame to them. And here again he falls into prayer, and from his prison intercedes with God on their behalf. He gives them, so to speak, a glimpse into his prison cell, where on his knees and pleading for these Churches, . . . he asks for them that they may be strengthened with power through the Holy Ghost, that Christ may dwell in their hearts through faith, that they may be rooted and grounded in love, that they may have the inward illumination by which the gracious work of God will be revealed to them in all its height and length and breadth and depth, that thus they may be filled with the very fulness of God.—*Godet: Studies on the Epistles*, pp. 205, 206.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 686. **The Essential Unity of the Church.** This does not consist in uniformity of creed, nor in identity of forms and rituals, but in the possession and manifestation of the life and spirit of Christ. Without this no one can be a follower of Christ except in name only (Rom. 8: 9). A Calvinist and a Catholic, each quickened by this love, and actuated by this spirit, are, notwithstanding all differences in belief and worship, nearer to Christ, and therefore nearer to each other, than two Calvinists or two Catholics, who, without this divine life in the soul, profess the same creed and use the same external forms.

§ 687. **Essential Unity Consistent with External Diversity.** As in the human body the life reveals itself amidst the utmost diversity of form and function in the members, so in the church universal, which is the body of Christ, the common spiritual life reveals itself under a great variety of denominational beliefs and practices. There are diversities of gifts, but the same spirit.

§ 688. **Essential Unity, and Personal Convictions of Truth.** While the recognition of the essential unity of the church gives scope for the fullest assertion of denominational differences, it by no means involves the admission that all these beliefs and practices are equally true and correct. But it should compel each person so to investigate the teachings of God's word as to be able to discriminate between revealed truth and human additions, and having found what he honestly believes to be the truth to cling to it with all his mind and soul.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE: *Ency. Brit.*, vol. viii, Art., "Ephesians, Epistle to the." 2. CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF EPHESIANS: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, New Ed., Art., "Ephesians, Epistle to the," pp. 960*b*, 961*a*. 3. ITS RELATION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE COLOSSIANS: *Ibid.*, pp. 957*b*–960*b*. 4. SIMILARITY BETWEEN COLOSSIANS AND EPHESIANS: *Ellicott*, Commentary, Colossians, Int., p. 120. 5. THE MESSAGE TO THE GENTILE CHURCHES: *Godet*, Studies on the Epistles, ch. 7. 6. WHAT GOD WROUGHT IN THE CHRIST; *Findlay*, Epistle to the Ephesians, ch. 6. 7. FROM DEATH TO LIFE: *Ibid.*, ch. 7. 8. THE DOUBLE RECONCILIATION: *Ibid.*, ch. 10.

**Lesson 39.—THE GOSPEL IN ROME. Its Progress Furthered
by Paul's Imprisonment.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 689. **Design of the Lesson.** To show, by means of Paul's epistle to the Philippians, the results of his preaching while a prisoner in Rome, the circumstances in which he found himself, his prospects for the future, and his readiness for either life or death as the termination of his imprisonment.

§ 690. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Recall the experiences of Paul in Philippi at the planting of the church; how he had been driven away by persecution; and note the remarkable affection and loyalty displayed by this church for Paul in all his subsequent ministry.

(2) Point out the occasion of this letter to the Philippians, its familiar and loving tone, and the absence of those severe warnings and rebukes which mark many of the other epistles of Paul.

(3) Show how his imprisonment instead of impeding the work of Christ in Rome seemed in many respects to facilitate it; not only by his own direct work in the prætorium, through which he reached very many who otherwise would not have heard the gospel, but also by the indirect influence of his presence, which inspired some to preach boldly because of their regard for him, and led others to increased activity in the church because of their jealousy and ill will.

(4) Notice the light thrown by the epistle on Paul's situation in Rome, and on his prospects of a speedy release; yet how a change for the worse seems to have taken place as compared with his situation as given in the last verses of the book of Acts, and how this makes the apostle somewhat doubtful as to the final issue of his imprisonment.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO PHILIPPIANS.

§ 691. **Characteristics of the Philippian Church.** Two features in the actual condition of Philippi which appear on the face of St. Luke's narrative and are not without their influence on the progress of the Gospel [were] its political status and its resident Jewish population. . . .

To the scanty number and feeble influence of the Jews we may perhaps in some degree ascribe the unswerving allegiance of this church to the person of the Apostle and to the true principles of the Gospel. . . . Yet even the Philippians were not safe from the intrusion of these dangerous teachers. At no great distance lay important Jewish settlements, the strongholds of this fanatical opposition. Even now there might be threatenings of an interference which would tamper with the allegiance and disturb the peace of his beloved church. . . .

The unwavering loyalty of his Philippian converts is the constant solace of the Apostle in his manifold trials, the one bright ray of happiness piercing the dark clouds which gather ever thicker about the evening of his life. They are his 'joy and crown, his brethren beloved and eagerly desired.' From them alone he

consents to receive alms for the relief of his personal wants. To them alone he writes in language unclouded by any shadow of displeasure or disappointment.

St. Paul's first visit to Philippi closed abruptly amid the storm of persecution. It was not to be expected that, where the life of the master had been so seriously endangered, the scholars would escape all penalties. The Apostle left behind him a legacy of suffering to this newly born church. This is not a mere conjecture: the afflictions of the Macedonian Christians, and of the Philippians especially, are more than once mentioned in St. Paul's epistles. If it was their privilege to believe in Christ, it was equally their privilege to suffer for Him. To this refiner's fire may doubtless be ascribed in part the lustre and purity of their faith compared with other churches. — *Lightfoot*: Philippians, pp. 49, 52, 57, 58.

On Paul's work in Philippi, see Library Extracts on Lesson 18, §§ 341-348.

§ 692. *The Epistle to the Philippians*: (1) *Where Written*. — Four of Paul's epistles — Philippians, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philemon — bear on their face that they were written while their author was a prisoner. They are therefore usually classed together and styled the Epistles of the Imprisonment, or the Prison-epistles. . . . Even those who maintain the Cæsarean origin of these [the last three] epistles, assign Philippians to the Roman imprisonment. For although the praetorium . . . might possibly be the palace of Herod at Cæsarea where he was confined, the mention of Cæsar's household, and the circumstances described in the first chapter are decisive in favour of Rome. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 127, 128.

(2) *Occasion of the Epistle*. — The occasion of the letter is obvious. Philippi was naturally the first city in Europe where Paul preached Christ. His maltreatment in their city drew out more powerfully the affection of the Philippians, so that "once and again" after he left them, they sent him pecuniary aid. For some time before the Roman imprisonment their friendly assistance had ceased, which Paul with his usual delicacy attributes to no decay of their affection, but solely to lack of opportunity. But this blank interval marked with all the greater emphasis their resumption of their old expressions of affection. While in Rome Paul received from his first European converts a gift made all the more acceptable by its conveyance in the hand of Epaphroditus, whose energetic co-operation with himself in Rome Paul cannot sufficiently eulogize. Indeed this stranger from Philippi so threw himself into the work of Christ in the metropolis, that he became seriously ill; and on recovering and hearing how anxious his friends in Philippi had been on his account, he desired to return to them. Paul could scarcely send him back without putting in his hands a written acknowledgment of their kindness. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 130, 131.

(3) *Style of the Epistle*. — [The Epistle to the Philippians] was meant to be a simple letter of friendship; "the most epistolary of the epistles," the easiest and most friendly of letters, it has been called. Paul pours into sympathetic ears a frank account of his circumstances, his expectations, his state of mind; and with a passing hint that their besetting infirmities were vanity and strife, he sets before them the great example of lowliness, and goes on to promise them a visit from Timothy and himself, and to commend Epaphroditus. Apparently he meant to conclude at this point; but after writing "Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord," he resumes in a somewhat different tone and adds nearly as much as he had already written. . . . The fresh beginning and continuance of the letter, even in a different tone, needs no further explanation than it finds in the ardour and rapidity of Paul's mind. Having finished all he meant to say, he adds an exhortation similar to the conclusion of the Galatian epistle, and this exhortation gathers as it goes. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 131, 132.

THE GOSPEL FURTHERED BY PAUL'S IMPRISONMENT.

§ 693. **Paul Preaching in Prison.** It came to pass that Paul saw the former wish of his heart to have fruit in the metropolis (Rom. 1 : 13) fulfilled to a degree that the dark dispensation by which he had come to Rome not as the victorious conqueror in the world in the service of the gospel but in chains and bonds, had never allowed him to hope. News of the strange prisoner who suffered bondage year after year for the sake of a new gospel of salvation had been spread through the whole barracks by the soldiers of the Pretorian guard who were alternately charged with his custody; and had thence penetrated to circles of the metropolis that had never heard of Christianity before; adherents were gained even in the Emperor's palace. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. i, p. 359.

§ 694. **Paul's Military Hearers in Prison.** [The epistle to the Philippians] gives us an unusual amount of information concerning the personal situation of its writer. . . . But nothing in it is more suggestive than St. Paul's allusion to the Prætorian guards, and to the converts he had gained in the household of Nero. He tells us . . . that throughout the Prætorian quarters he was well known as a prisoner for the cause of Christ, and he sends special salutations to the Philippian Church from the Christians [probably slaves] in the Imperial household. These notices bring before us very vividly the moral contrasts by which the Apostle was surrounded. The soldier to whom he was chained to-day might have been in Nero's body-guard yesterday; his comrade who next relieved guard upon the prisoner, might have been one of the executioners of Octavia, and might have carried her head to Poppæa a few weeks before. Such were the ordinary employments of the fierce and blood-stained veterans who were daily present, like wolves in the midst of sheep, at the meetings of the Christian brotherhood.

If there were any of these soldiers not utterly hardened by a life of cruelty, their hearts must surely have been touched by the character of their prisoner, brought as they were into so close a contact with him. They must have been at least astonished to see a man, under such circumstances, so utterly careless of selfish interests, and devoting himself with an energy so unaccountable to the teaching of others. Strange indeed to their ears, fresh from the brutality of a Roman barrack, must have been the sound of Christian exhortation, of prayers, and of hymns; stranger still, perhaps, the tender love which bound the converts to their teacher and to one another, and showed itself in every look and tone. — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, p. 432.

§ 695. **A Strange Contrast: The Worship of Christ vs. the Worship of Nero.** History has few stranger contrasts than when it shows us Paul preaching Christ under the walls of Nero's palace. Thenceforward, there were but two religions in the Roman world; the worship of the Emperor and the worship of the Saviour. The old superstitions had been long worn out; they had lost all hold on educated minds. There remained to civilised heathens no other worship possible but the worship of power; and the incarnation of power which they chose was, very naturally, the Sovereign of the world.

This, then, was the ultimate result of the noble intuitions of Plato, the methodical reasonings of Aristotle, the pure morality of Socrates. All had failed, for want of external sanction and authority. The residuum they left was the philosophy of Epicurus, and the religion of Nerolatry. But a new doctrine was already taught in the Forum, and believed even on the Palatine. Over against the altars of Nero and Poppæa, the voice of a prisoner was daily heard, and daily woke in grovelling souls the consciousness of their divine destiny. Men listened and knew that self-sacrifice was better than ease, humiliation more exalted than pride,

to suffer nobler than to reign. They felt that the only religion which satisfied the needs of man was the religion of sorrow, the religion of self-devotion, the religion of the cross. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 434, 435.

§ 696. **Increased Preaching of the Gospel by Others in Rome.** (1) *Preaching through Envy.* — Moreover . . . [Paul's] captivity in Rome tended not a little to stimulate the brethren there in making known the gospel; for apart from the encouraging example afforded by his own irrepressible joy in confessing it, it became more and more evident that no valid accusation could be brought against the evangelical message for which he was in bonds. The Apostle did not indeed conceal from himself the fact that the zeal he excited for the work of evangelization did not invariably proceed from pure motives. It was evident that those who had hitherto played the most prominent part in the Church, and had formerly welcomed the Apostle with joy when he had come presumably for a short stay, now felt injured by the fact that in spite of his imprisonment he formed the true centre of the Church. Their chief concern was by their own redoubled activity to outdo him in the influence which they envied him; and by invidious criticism of his person and work to depreciate his authority in their own favour. But if they thought by this means to make the captive painfully aware of their superiority, they little knew the Apostle's unselfish interest in the cause of Christ. Nor had he any lack of brethren who adhered faithfully to him. He frequently suffered from want of earthly goods; but he was accustomed to this, and did not feel it. — *Weiss* : Introduction, New Test., vol. 1, pp. 359, 360.

(2) *Preaching through Strife.* — [Some of those to whom Paul refers as preaching through "envy and strife" were probably] members of that Judaistic party, or school, within the Church, which followed him with persistent opposition, especially since the crisis when a decisive victory over their main principle was obtained by St. Paul in the Church-council at Jerusalem. Their distinctive idea was that while the Gospel was the goal of the Mosaic institutions, those institutions were to be permanently, and for each individual convert, the fence or hedge of the Gospel. Only through personal entrance into the covenant of circumcision could the man attain the blessings of the covenant of baptism. Such a tenet would not *necessarily* preclude, in its teacher, a true belief in and proclamation of the Person and the central Work of the true Christ, however much it might (as it did, in the course of history) *tend* to a lowered and distorted view even of His Person. St. Paul [though always opposing the introduction of these Jewish teachings into churches already established] was thus able to rejoice in the work of these preachers, so far as it was a true conveyance to Pagan hearers at Rome of the primary Fact of the Gospel — Jesus Christ. — *Moule* : In Cambridge Bible, Philipians, p. 48.

PAUL'S READINESS FOR ANY FATE.

§ 697. "In a Strait." "For him to live was Christ"; that is, to do the work and serve the interest of Christ. For him "to die was gain," that is, would be his own interest and reward. His *strait* was not, whether it would be good to live or good to depart, because both were good; but he doubted which of the two was most desirable. Nor was it his meaning to bring his own interest and Christ's into competition with each other. By Christ, or the interest of Christ, he means his serving the churches of Christ upon earth. But he knew that Christ had an interest also in his saints above; and could raise up more to serve him here. Yet, because he was to judge by what appeared, and saw that such were much wanted upon earth, this turned the scales in his choice; and therefore, in order to serve Christ in the edification of his churches, he was more inclined, by denying

himself, to have his reward delayed.—*Baxter*: In Butler's Bible-Work, New Test., vol. ii, p. 448b.

§ 698. **Calmly Awaiting the Outcome.** He has a full assurance that all the events to which he has thus referred will turn to his salvation — whether by death, if the Lord is pleased to call him to the honour of martyrdom, or by life, if He permits him still to labour on a little longer for the good of the Church on earth. He himself is perfectly content with either alternative. But he has a conviction that he shall live, and that it will yet be given him to stand once again in the midst of the Philippian Church for their furtherance and joy of faith.—*Godet*: Studies on the Epistles, pp. 249, 250.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 699. **The Expression of Gratitude.** Sweeter than violets in springtime is a tender and delicate expression of gratitude for favors received. Sharper than a serpent's tooth is the sting of ingratitude. It may never be in our power to repay a kindness received, but gratitude reveals a loving and appreciative heart.

§ 700. **Service to Christ's Disciples is Service for Christ.** The Philip-pians whose love for Paul showed itself in ministering to his needs, were in reality ministering to Christ. Paul the servant could not repay the debt, but he knew that God, who does not overlook even a cup of cold water given in Christ's name, would supply all their needs.

§ 701. **Godliness with Contentment, Great Gain.** Paul had learned in whatsoever state he was therewith to be content, because he had also learned to limit his wants to his real needs. God has promised to supply all our needs, but he has nowhere promised to supply all our wants. Much of our unhappiness and discontent arises from a failure to discriminate between wants which may be limitless, and needs that are limited.

§ 702. **The Christian's Anticipation of Death.** He who has truly committed his life and all his cares into God's hands, has no anxieties concerning what the morrow may bring. Life means continued work for a Master whose service is the highest joy of life; death means seeing that Master's face, abiding in his presence, and sharing his heavenly joy forever.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE CITY OF PHILIPPI: ITS HISTORY AND IMPORTANCE: Ency. Brit., vol. xviii, Art., "Philippi"; Handy Commentary, Acts, p. 253; *Lightfoot*, St. Paul's Epistle to the Philippians, pp. 46-48. 2. PAUL'S PRISON LIFE IN ROME, ILLUSTRATED BY THAT OF HEROD AGRIPPA II: Ibid., pp. 101, 102. 3. CÆSAR'S HOUSEHOLD: Ibid., pp. 169-176. 4. CLEMENT, PAUL'S FELLOW-WORKER: Ibid., pp. 166-169. 5. ORDER OF THE EPISTLES OF THE CAPTIVITY: Ibid., ch. 2. 6. LOST EPISTLES TO THE PHILIPPIANS: Ibid., pp. 136-140. 7. THE EXAMPLE OF CHRIST'S HUMILITY: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp., 599, 600.

Lesson 40. — PAUL'S FOURTH MISSIONARY JOURNEY. His Last Words and Impending Martyrdom.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 703. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the extent of Paul's missionary work after his release from the first Roman imprisonment; his condition and

experiences in his second Roman imprisonment, and his feelings in view of his impending death, in so far as these things are indicated in the epistles which date from this period.

§ 704. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Notice the general character of the Pastoral epistles, and the almost insurmountable difficulties in assigning their composition to any portion of Paul's life narrated in the Acts, or of harmonizing the notices of Paul's movements, given in them, with any of his journeys as described by Luke.

(2) Show how these considerations compel us to assume that Paul was liberated from his first Roman imprisonment, enjoyed a period of liberty and missionary work during which he wrote 1 Timothy and Titus, after which he was arrested and carried to Rome, where in expectation of a speedy martyrdom he wrote 2 Timothy.

(3) Follow the apostle's movements after his release, in the probable realization of his intention to visit Philippi and Colosse, in a possible visit to Spain and return to Ephesus, in his journeys into Macedonia and Crete, and in his final journey from Ephesus to Corinth and Nicopolis.

(4) Call attention to the fact that the burning of Rome and the beginning of the Neronian persecution probably occurred while Paul was on these journeys, and that somewhere on his route, perhaps at Nicopolis, he was again arrested and taken to Rome.

(5) Picture his last imprisonment, his almost utter loneliness, his pathetic yearning for Timothy, the hardships of his dungeon life, and his expectation of a violent death; yet note his courage, his unshaken faith, his calm and joyful survey of his past career, and his exultant cry of triumph as he sees the victor's crown almost within his reach.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 705. **The Pastoral Epistles.** (1) *Time and Place of Composition.*—The fourth group of St. Paul's Epistles [Titus, and 1 and 2 Timothy] belongs to the period which elapsed between the last mention of him in the Acts and his martyrdom at Rome. Our knowledge of his movements during this period depends entirely on these Epistles, except that an early tradition declares that he fulfilled the intention expressed in Rom. 15: 28 and visited Spain. Assuming, as on the whole we are justified in assuming, that these letters are genuine, it is clear that he must have been set free from his first Roman imprisonment, and have spent at least some part of his time in revisiting his old friends in Greece and Asia Minor. To this interval of freedom we must assign the Epistle to Titus and the First Epistle to Timothy. . . .

The circumstances under which the Second Epistle to Timothy was composed confer on it a peculiar pathos, and stamp the mark of heroic grandeur on its indomitable trust. It was written from Rome after the first stage of a new trial. St. Paul was in serious danger, and some even of his trusted friends had deserted him. In the bitterness of his isolation he longs for the presence of his 'darling son' and writes to bid him come at once and bring Mark with him. . . . As he

writes the sword of the executioner is hanging over his head, and the blow may fall at any moment.' So he takes this opportunity, which may so well be his last, to give full expression to all the affectionate solicitude of his loving heart for one who has been for many years his faithful companion. — *Murray*: In *Cambridge Companion*, p. 79.

(2) *Heresies Combated*. — The condition described in the Pastoral Epistles is rather that of a soil prepared for Gnosticism, than that of an already developed heresy. As Weiss says, "It is not a question of actual error that denied or combated the truth of salvation, a fact that has constantly been ignored or directly contradicted; but of teaching strange things that had nothing to do with saving truth, of foolish and presumptuous enquiry respecting things of which nothing is or can actually be known; which, moreover, are altogether unprofitable and empty of truth, so that they lead only to vain talk, to profane babbling, destitute of all true religious value. Those who occupy themselves with such things think by this means to attain to and participate in knowledge of an exceptionally high character. . . . The writer enters into no direct polemic with the heretical teachers, but merely in a passing and incidental manner warns Timothy against them. . . . The "endless genealogies" do, however, identify these teachers with incipient Gnosticism [see § 670, Lesson 37], while the use they made of "the Law" and "Jewish fables," as well as their comparison to Jannes and Jambres, identify them as Jews. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 174, 175.

PAUL'S MOVEMENTS AFTER HIS RELEASE.

Remark. — Our information concerning this part of Paul's life is too scanty to afford any certain basis for tracing his journeys after his release. The most that can be said for the scheme here followed is that it combines the scattered hints of his movements as given in the Pastoral epistles, in such a way as to have some appearance of probability. Other schemes might be given, but we follow this as perhaps on the whole the best.

§ 706. **The First Visit to the East. General Statement of Paul's probable Movements after his Release.** As to the order in which St. Paul visited the East and West. On the whole, it is probable that he went eastward immediately after his release. . . . It is certain that he was there towards the very close of his life. The notices of his transactions in the East scattered through the Pastoral Epistles reach continuously to the time of his second imprisonment at Rome, which ended in his death. If this be so, the visit to Spain and the West [if it occurred at all] must have intervened between two visits to the East. For these incidents there is ample time in the four or five years which elapsed before his martyrdom. We obtain then

(1) A visit to the East, probably brief, according with his intention expressed to the Philippians and to Philemon.

(2) The fulfilment of his long-cherished purpose of preaching in Spain and the West.

(3) A return to the East.

Eastward then the Apostle hastens after his release. First of all perhaps he revisited the Macedonian Churches, fulfilling his promise to the Philippians. We may imagine him next directing his steps towards the Churches of Asia and Phrygia. The unhealthy tone of religious speculation in these districts needed correction. And to Colossæ moreover he was drawn by a personal motive. He was anxious to assure himself that Onesimus was fully restored to his master's favour, and to carry out his undertaking of staying with Philemon. We can scarcely suppose that he left these regions without a brief visit to the Church of Ephesus, which had occupied so much of his time and thoughts; and it is possible that some of the notices in the Pastoral Epistles refer to incidents which occurred on this occasion, though it is on the whole more probable that they took place on

a later visit. . . . Having thus taken a rapid review of the Churches of the East, the Apostle [possibly] hastened to fulfil his long-postponed intention of visiting the hitherto unexplored region of Spain. — *Lightfoot*: Biblical Essays, pp. 430, 431.

§ 707. **The Burning of Rome, and the Neronian Persecution.** According to Tacitus, Nero wished to divert from himself the indignation which was universally entertained against him as the author of the conflagration which destroyed great part of Rome in A.D. 64. He turned to his purpose the popular dislike of the new sect of fanatics, who were generally detested on account of the abominable crimes of which they were supposed to be guilty, and who were nicknamed by the populace "Christians." He laid the blame of the fire on them, as being enemies of society, eager to injure the city.

The Christians, therefore, were sought out. Those first of all who openly confessed the charge of Christianity were hurried to trial. Then on the information elicited at their trial, many others were involved in their fate, far less on the charge of incendiarism, than on hostility to society and hatred of the world. Their punishment was turned into an amusement to divert the populace; for example, they were made to play the part of Actæon torn by his dogs, or were fixed on crosses to be set on fire, and to serve as torches at nightly festivities held in the Vatican Gardens. . . . The judgment of the mob on the origin of the fire was not permanently blinded: Nero was the real culprit, and not these miserable victims. At last popular feeling veered round, and the Roman public began to feel compassion for the Christians. — *Ramsay*: Church in the Roman Empire, pp. 233-235.

The burning of Rome and the consequent beginning of the Neronian persecution may have occurred while Paul was in Spain, at all events it was probably after his release from his first imprisonment.

§ 708. **The Return to the East, and the First Epistle to Timothy.** From Spain St. Paul seems to have returned . . . to Ephesus, and here he found that the predictions which he had long ago uttered to the Ephesian presbyters were already receiving their fulfilment. Heretical teachers had arisen in the very bosom of the Church, and were leading away the believers after themselves. . . . We may imagine the grief and indignation aroused in the breast of St. Paul, when he found the extent of the evil, and the number of Christian converts already infected by the spreading plague.

Nevertheless, it is evident from the Epistles to Timotheus and Titus, written about this time, that he was prevented by other duties from staying in this oriental region so long as his presence was required. He left his disciples to do that which, had circumstances permitted, he would have done himself. He was plainly hurried from one point to another . . . , first to Macedonia, and afterwards to Crete; and immediately on his return from thence, he appears finally to have left Ephesus for Rome, by way of Corinth. . . .

When he arrived in Macedonia, he found that his absence might possibly be prolonged beyond what he had expected; and he probably felt that Timotheus might need some more explicit credential from himself than a mere verbal commission, to enable him for a longer period to exercise that Apostolic authority over the Ephesian Church, wherewith he had invested him. It would also be desirable that Timotheus should be able, in his struggle with the heretical teachers, to exhibit documentary proof of St. Paul's agreement with himself, and condemnation of the opposing doctrines. Such seem to have been the principal motives which led St. Paul to despatch from Macedonia that which is known as "the First Epistle to Timothy." — *Conybeare and Howson*: St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 447, 448.

§ 709. **Paul's Visit to Crete, and the Epistle to Titus.** The expectations which St. Paul expressed in the above letter [1 Timothy] of more prolonged

absence from Ephesus, could scarcely have been fulfilled for soon after we find that he had been in Crete (which seems to imply that, on his way thither, he has passed through Ephesus), and was now again on his way westwards. We must suppose, then, that he returned shortly from Macedonia to Ephesus, as he hoped, though doubtfully, to be able to do when he wrote to Timotheus. From Ephesus, as we have just said, he soon afterwards made an expedition to Crete . . . in company with Titus, whom he left in Crete as his representative on his departure. He himself was unable to remain long enough to do what was needful, either in silencing error, or in selecting fit persons as presbyters of the numerous scattered Churches, which would manifestly be a work of time. Probably he confined his efforts to a few of the principal places, and empowered Titus to do the rest. Thus, Titus was left at Crete in the same position which Timotheus had occupied at Ephesus during St. Paul's recent absence; and there would, consequently, be the same advantage in his receiving written directions from St. Paul concerning the government and organisation of the Church, which we have before mentioned in the case of Timotheus. Accordingly, shortly after leaving Crete, St. Paul sent a letter to Titus, . . . [which] seems to have been despatched from Ephesus at the moment when St. Paul was on the eve of departure on a westward journey, which was to take him as far as Nicopolis (in Epirus) before the winter. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 460, 461.

§ 710. The Arrest of Paul at Nicopolis(?), and his Transfer to Rome. We see from the above letter [to Titus] that Titus was desired to join St. Paul at Nicopolis, where the Apostle designed to winter. We learn, from an incidental notice elsewhere, that the route he pursued was from Ephesus to Miletus, where his old companion Trophimus remained behind from sickness, and thence to Corinth, where he left Erastus . . . whom, perhaps, he had expected, or wished, to accompany him in his farther progress. The position of Nicopolis would render it a good centre for operating upon the surrounding province; and thence St. Paul might make excursions to those Churches of Illyricum which he perhaps founded himself at an earlier period. . . .

It seems most probable, however, that St. Paul was not permitted to spend the whole of this winter in security at Nicopolis. The Christians were now far more obnoxious to the Roman authorities than formerly. . . . There is nothing improbable in supposing that, upon the testimony of some informer, he was arrested by the Duumvirs of Nicopolis, and forwarded to Rome for trial. The indications which we gather from the Second Epistle to Timotheus render it probable that this arrest took place not later than mid-winter. — *Conybeare and Howson* : St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 465-467.

Farrar, in his *Life of St. Paul*, ch. 55, expresses the opinion that Paul was arrested at Troas, after leaving Nicopolis, and that he was forwarded thence to Rome for trial.

§ 711. The Second Imprisonment, and First Defense. It was not long, accordingly, before Paul was lying once more in prison at Rome; and it was no mild imprisonment this time, but the worst known to the law. No troops of friends now filled his room, for the Christians of Rome had been massacred or scattered, and it was dangerous for any one to avow himself a Christian. We have a letter written from his dungeon, the last he ever wrote, the Second Epistle to Timothy, which affords us a glimpse of unspeakable pathos into the circumstances of the prisoner. He tells us that one part of his trial is already over. Not a friend stood by him as he faced the bloodthirsty tyrant who sat on the judgment-seat. But the Lord stood by him and enabled him to make the emperor and the spectators in the crowded basilica hear the sound of the gospel. The charge against him had broken down. But he had no hope of escape. Other

stages of the trial had yet to come, and he knew that evidence to condemn him would either be discovered or manufactured. — *Stalker*: St. Paul, pp. 164, 165.

THE FINAL GLIMPSE OF PAUL, AND HIS LAST WORDS.

§ 712. **Paul's Life in the Roman Dungeon, and his Last Words.** The letter [2 Timothy] betrays the miseries of his dungeon. He prays Timothy to bring him a cloak he had left at Troas to defend him from the damp of the cell and the cold of the winter. He asks for his books and parchments, that he may relieve the tedium of his solitary hours with the studies he had always loved. But, above all, he beseeches Timothy to come himself, for he was longing to feel the touch of a friendly hand and see the face of a friend yet once again before he died. Was the brave heart then conquered at last? Read the Epistle and see. How does it begin? . . . "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day" [2 Tim. 1:12]. How does it end? . . . "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith . . ." [4:7, 8]. This is not the strain of the vanquished. — *Stalker*: St. Paul, p. 165.

§ 713. **Paul's Second Defense, and his Martyrdom.** Did Paul ever get that cloak, and the papyri and the vellum rolls? Did Timothy ever reach him? None can tell us. With the last verse of the Second Epistle to Timothy we have heard Paul's last word. In some Roman basilica, perhaps before Helius, the Emperor's freedman, in the presence of some dense, curious, hostile crowd of Jews and Pagans, he must have been heard once more, in his second defence, or on the second count of the indictment against him; and on this occasion the majority of the assessors must have dropped the tablet C—the tablet of condemnation—into the voting urn, and the presiding judge must have pronounced sentence of decapitation on one who, though condemned of holding a dangerous and illegal superstition, was still a Roman citizen. Was he alone at his second trial as at his first? Did the Gentiles again hear of Jesus and the Resurrection? . . . All such questions are asked in vain. Of this alone we may feel convinced—that he heard the sentence pronounced upon him with a feeling akin to joy. . . .

They who will may follow him in imagination to the possible scene of his martyrdom, but every detail must be borrowed from imagination alone. It may be that the legendary is also the real scene of his death. If so, accompanied by the centurion and the soldiers who were to see him executed, he left Rome by the gate now called by his name. . . . For nearly three miles the sad procession walked; and doubtless the dregs of the populace, who always delight in a scene of horror, gathered round them. About three miles from home, not far from the Ostian road, is a green and level spot, with low hills around it, known anciently as *Aquae Salviae*, and now as *Tre Fontane*. There the word of command to halt was given; the prisoner knelt down; the sword flashed, and the life of the greatest of the Apostles was shorn away. — *Farrar*: St. Paul, pp. 685, 686.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 714. **Christ, the Faithful Friend.** How pathetic was Paul's word to Timothy, "Only Luke is with me." Blessed be the memory of that faithful companion whom no personal danger could deter from his loving ministry to the aged apostle over whose head hung the executioner's sword. Such friendships are rarer and more precious than gems. But even Luke could only accompany his friend to the place of execution. Christ not only stands by us in all earthly peril and loss, but goes with us into the unknown and untried future, through all darkness and fear into the unfading light and eternal life of heaven.

§ 715. Paul the Christian Martyr, and Nero the Imperial Suicide. How boundless the contrast between them! The one, a reviled prisoner loaded with chains, confined in a loathsome dungeon, almost deserted by his friends, and suffering a felon's death; but with a pure conscience, an untroubled soul, and celestial companionships, leaving a name and moral influence that rank highest among the sons of men and, uplifted and sustained by an unfaltering sense of victory, passing away to a future of inconceivable glory and blessedness. The other, fawned on by cringing flatterers, enjoying in the palace of the Cæsars the gratification of every possible whim, himself and his golden images worshiped; yet stained by unspeakable vices and loaded with innumerable crimes, tormented by fear and guilt, dying like a hunted rat in a hole, leaving a name that has been the world's execration, and plunging into the horrors of an eternity unilluminated by a solitary ray of light or hope. When Paul stood before the tribunal of Nero the moral extremes of the human race faced each other.

§ 716. What God Treasures in Human Life. When the work of God's faithful servants is finished, he takes them to himself, and treasures up all that is of eternal value in their work and influence. But he is indifferent to that which possesses human interest only. He has withheld from us a knowledge of even the place and manner of the death of Paul, the most illustrious of his servants. He is too wise to preserve the mouldering bones of his prophets and apostles in jeweled caskets to stimulate superstitious adoration.

§ 717. Paul's Triumphant Assurance in View of Death. This was a natural result of a life spent in most laborious self-sacrificing service for Christ. Those who like Paul have unflinchingly fought their good battle to the end can join with him in the pæan of victory. What better outcome of life is there than to be able to say "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith."

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. DESCRIPTION OF ANCIENT ROME: *Abbott*, Commentary, Romans, Int., ch. 5.
2. FROM ROME TO SPAIN: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 293 ff.
3. THE CHURCHES OF CRETE: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. iii, Titus, Prolegomena, pp. 108-III.
4. THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: *Bleek*, Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 51-55; *Weiss*, Introduction, New Test., vol. i, pp. 374-420.
5. DATE OF THE PASTORAL EPISTLES: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, App., pp. 532-547; *Lightfoot*, Biblical Essays, ch. II.
6. PAUL'S LAST JOURNEY TO ROME: *Farrar*, Life and Work of St. Paul, pp. 668, 669.
7. PAUL'S SECOND ROMAN IMPRISONMENT: *Meyer*, Commentary, Acts, p. 510.
8. PAUL'S FIRST TRIAL BEFORE NERO, AND HIS ACQUITTAL: *Conybeare and Howson*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 441-446.
9. PROBABLE DATE OF PAUL'S MARTYRDOM: *Ibid.*, p. 440.
10. LEGENDS CONNECTED WITH ST. PAUL'S DEATH: *Ibid.*, pp. 488-490.

Lesson 41. — REVIEW OF PART IV: Lessons 31-40.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 718. Design of the Lesson. Read carefully what is said in § 247, Lesson 13, regarding the design of a review. The statements made there apply with equal force to this lesson.

§ 719. Preparing and Teaching the Lesson. (1) Read also § 248, Lesson 13, and apply the same to this lesson.

(2) Request the class to be prepared to state the contents of the Introductory Note to Part IV in the Lessons (see Lesson 31), and also of the Introductory Note to this lesson. The former gives the leading characteristics of the Period included in Part IV, while the latter gives a summary of its entire history, all of which should be carefully studied.

(3) If necessary, apportion these notes among the scholars to state their contents, and ask the class to make any additions that may be necessary to bring out all the facts referred to. Either by such statements, or by questions and answers, bring clearly before the class a general survey of the ground covered in Part IV.

(4) If the class or school is provided with a large map of the eastern half of the Mediterranean, let some pupil point out the course of Paul's voyage to Rome, naming the places touched; let another point out the places mentioned in connection with the fourth missionary journey. In the absence of a large map, Map No. 5 in the MANUAL, page 175, may be used.

§ 720. Important Points to be Aimed at in the General Survey. (1) Make it a rapid survey of the entire period covered in Lessons 31-40, showing that this was a period during the greater part of which Paul was providentially withdrawn from missionary work, except in so far as he was permitted to preach as a prisoner at Cæsarea and at Rome. It was therefore a period of meditation; and of recuperation for the fourth missionary journey which closed his active labors among the churches.

(2) Note that the time covered by the first Roman imprisonment was at least four and a half or five years; that it probably terminated sufficiently long before the breaking out of the Neronian persecution in A.D. 64 to enable Paul to make his anticipated visits to Macedonia and Asia Minor, and perhaps his visit to Spain; note also that the time covered by this season of liberty and the subsequent second imprisonment is not known, but that it could not well have been less than three, nor more than five, years.

(3) Observe that as a result of the first imprisonment we have the four epistles known as Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians, and as a result of the second imprisonment, the two epistles to Timothy and that to Titus. Of what Paul was enabled to accomplish during the fourth missionary journey but little is known.

(4) Call attention to the fact that this period witnessed the first active persecution of Christians by the imperial Roman government, as a result of which Paul, and shortly afterwards Peter, if we may trust tradition, suffered martyrdom in Rome.

(5) Show that while in this period the echoes of the long controversy over the relation of the Gentiles to the Jewish law had in large measure died away, the hostility of the extreme Jewish-Christian party toward Paul was still so great that on his fifth and last visit to Jerusalem he felt constrained to adopt special measures to conciliate them; but that his efforts in this direction were followed by the riot, his arrest, and the long train of subsequent events. The overcoming of these national Jewish prejudices demanded severer measures than the preaching of Paul.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

Lesson 42. — CHRISTIANS SUFFERING FOR RIGHTEOUSNESS'
SAKE. Peter's Exhortations to Patience and Well-doing.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 721. Design of the Lesson. To show the situation of the Christians to whom Peter addressed his first epistle, and the truths by which he sought to comfort and strengthen them in their trials.

§ 722. Preparing and Teaching the Lesson. (1) Gather up what few hints are found in the New Testament touching the later life of the apostle Peter; in contrast with this reticence of the Scriptures regarding him, note the luxuriant growth of tradition that after a few centuries had grown up around his name, and in view of the self-contradictions and late date of these traditions, try to estimate their historical value.

(2) Consider the main facts touching the first epistle of Peter, such as its genuineness, date, purpose, to whom written, etc.

(3) Show that whereas in Paul's epistles the keyword is *faith*, and in that of James it is *works* rooted in faith, here it is *hope* — a well-founded expectation that not only sustains the believer during the trials of this life, but that enables him to anticipate his blessed inheritance in the world to come.

(4) Call attention to the light thrown by the epistle on the condition of those for whom it was written; that they were suffering for conscience's sake, and as Christians, but that however severe such sufferings might be, there was no shame in them, but rather honor and glory.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO 1 PETER.

§ 723. The Tradition of Peter's Residence in Rome and Martyrdom There. [The] incident at Antioch [Gal. 2: 11-14] is the last that is certainly known of Peter. The prophecy recorded in Jo. 21: 18, 19, is in harmony with early tradition in pointing to a violent death. But of the time and place of that death we know nothing with even approximate probability. The only historical mention of him for more than a hundred years afterwards is in Clement of Rome, who sets before the Corinthians the example of "Peter, who through zeal under-

took not one or two but numerous labours, and so having borne witness went to the place that was due to him."

It is sometimes supposed that an indication of the place in which he "bore witness" or "suffered martyrdom" is afforded by the phrase "among us," *i.e.*, among the Romans, in the next chapter; but this, though possible, is quite uncertain. Outside this statement, which if it were more definite would be conclusive, there is only the doubtful interpretation of "Babylon" in 1 Pet. 5: 13 as meaning "Rome." . . . But from the beginning of the last quarter of the second century the testimony to the presence and death of Peter at Rome is almost uniform; the tradition, whatever may have been its foundation in fact, had firmly established itself. . . .

In almost all later patristic accounts of Peter Simon Magus has an important place; he is said to have gone to Rome in the time of Claudius, and Peter is said to have at once followed him in 42 A.D.; hence, as Peter lived until the Neronian persecution in 67 there was room for an episcopate of twenty-five years. This last tradition can hardly be reconciled with the facts mentioned in the New Testament of his presence at Jerusalem and at Antioch (Acts, ch. 15; Gal., ch. 2). — *Hatch*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xviii, Art., "Peter," pp. 695, 696.

§ 724. **Objections to this Tradition.** One stream of tradition, for the existence of which it is difficult to account if the other tradition had been uniform, represents Peter as having worked at Antioch, in Asia Minor, in Babylonia, and in the "country of the barbarians" on the northern shores of the Black Sea. This is in harmony with the geographical details of the first of the two epistles which bear his name. That epistle is addressed to the "elect who are sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia," and the "Babylon" from which it is obviously written (1 Pet. 5: 13) is best understood not as a cryptographic expression for Rome, but, like the other geographical names of the epistles of the New Testament, in a literal sense. All this, no doubt, is not inconsistent with the supposition that Peter went to Rome towards the end of his life, but it seems to exclude the theory that he made a lengthened stay there and was the founder of the Roman Church. . . .

The probabilities of the case are evenly balanced; on the one hand it is difficult to account for the complete silence as to Peter in the Pauline epistles, and it is impossible with those epistles in sight to regard Peter as the founder of the Roman community; on the other hand, it is difficult to suppose that so large a body of tradition had no foundation in fact. — *Hatch*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xviii, Art., "Peter," pp. 695, 696.

§ 725. **The First Epistle of Peter.** (1) *Authenticity.* — The external evidence of authenticity is of the strongest kind. Referred to in the Second Epistle; known to Polycarp, and frequently alluded to in his Epistle to the Philippians; recognized by Papias; repeatedly quoted by Irenæus, Clemens of Alexandria, Tertullian, and Origen; it was accepted without hesitation by the Universal Church. The internal evidence is equally strong. — *Cook*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., Art., "Peter (First Epistle)," p. 2455a.

(2) *To whom Written.* — This epistle describes itself as written by "Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ," to "the elect strangers (or pilgrims) of the dispersion, in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, Bithynia." This address, especially the word dispersion, obliges us to think mainly of believing *Jews*. . . . Other passages seem to indicate that the writer is thinking of his readers as those who have been converted from among the Gentiles. . . . We cannot suppose that he meant to exclude Jewish Christians in any of the districts from among his readers, for there is no hint of this in the epistle; but his language implies that the majority of

Christians in the districts named were Gentiles, and that he was therefore led to think of them mainly as his readers. — *Bleek*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 163, 164.

(3) *Date of the Epistle*. — The date is also uncertain. It seems likely that Peter suffered martyrdom at Rome about the year 67 A.D., which accordingly limits the date on the one side. On the other side the date is limited by the Epistle of Paul to the Romans, of which, as we have seen, Peter made use. If he also had seen the Epistle to the Ephesians, this would bring his epistle down to some year subsequent to Paul's imprisonment; so that we should be compelled to place it in the year 65 or 66. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 204, 205.

(4) *Object of the Epistle*. — The object of the letter is practical. It is intended to encourage the Christians who were suffering on account of their faith, and who apparently feared even greater sufferings. The Apostle writes cheerily and hopefully, reminding them that they have an inheritance "incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away," and that, although they may be called to many trials, these will pass away and leave them in possession of a perfect salvation, which will be revealed at the appearing of Christ. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., p. 205.

(5) *Occasion of the Epistle*. — Silvanus had come to him [Peter] bringing tidings that they [the churches] were exposed to a fiery trial of persecution. They were accused of being evil-doers, preaching revolutionary doctrines. The very name of Christian then, as afterwards under Pliny's régime, exposed them to odium and outrage. The teachers to whom they owed so much, Paul and Aquila and Luke, were no longer with them. The state of things described in the First, and yet more in the Second Epistle, exactly answers to that which we find in St. Paul's Epistles to Timothy. . . . When a wave of fanatic hatred directed against the name of Christian was flowing well-nigh over the length and breadth of the Empire, rulers in the provinces were but too likely to follow the example which Nero had set them in the capital. The Apostle felt that he could not withhold his words of comfort and counsel from those who were thus suffering. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Peter, pp. 62, 63.

(6) *The Influences that Shaped Peter's Life*. — We cannot read his Epistles without seeing that what the Apostle then witnessed [in his early life] left on him an ineffaceable impression. He had been an "eye-witness" of the sufferings of the Christ (1 Pet. 5: 1). He knew of those "buffetings" in the High Priest's palace which the sinless One had borne with such silent patience (1 Pet. 2: 19-23). He had found healing for his own soul in those livid marks which the scourge had then inflicted. He had felt that he too was a sheep that had gone astray, and that he had been brought back to the fold by Him who was the true Shepherd and Protector of his soul (1 Pet. 2: 24, 25). He had been taught by the terrible experience of his own weakness in "denying the Lord who had bought him" (2 Pet. 2: 1), the intensity of that sin when it was not the momentary failure of faith and courage, but the persistent apostasy of a life. He had learnt too that a "haughty spirit goeth before a fall," that "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble" (1 Pet. 5: 5). . . .

The influences which were chiefly at work in fashioning St. Peter's character were (1) the teaching of our Lord as recorded in the Gospels, (2) his association with St. James, the brother of the Lord, in the superintendence of the Church of the Circumcision, (3) his friendship with St. John, (4) his knowledge of St. Paul's teaching as communicated orally or embodied in his Epistles. It is believed that a careful study of these two Epistles . . . will show that they present many traces, sometimes in their thoughts, sometimes in their words and phrases, of each of these influences. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Peter, pp. 62, 63.

THE CHRISTIAN'S LIVING HOPE.

§ 726. **Begotten unto a Living Hope.** (1) What is the principal fruit and end of this new generation? A living hope. Its object is not only our future resurrection, but the whole plenitude of the salvation still to be revealed by Jesus Christ, even until the new heavens and the new earth shall appear (2 Pet. 3: 13, 14; Rev. 21: 1). Birth implies life; so it is with the hope of believers, which is the very opposite of the vain, lost and powerless hope of the worldly-minded. It is powerful, and quickens the heart by comforting, strengthening, and encouraging it, by making it joyous and cheerful in God. Its quickening influence enters even into our physical life. "Hope is not only the fulfilment of the new life, created in regeneration, but also the innermost kernel of the same." — *Fronnmüller*: In Lange's Commentary, 1 Peter, p. 15a.

(2) [The Apostle terms these expectations] "a living hope," a hope not destined, as human hopes proverbially were, to be frail and perishable, but having in it the elements of a perennial life. And this was brought about by God's regenerating work on and in the soul. The word which St. Peter uses is peculiar to him among the writers of the New Testament, and meets us again in verse 23. The thought, however, is common to him with St. James, with St. Paul, and with our Lord's teaching as recorded by St. John. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Peter, p. 94.

§ 727. **The Heavenly Inheritance.** Christians are begotten again, not to defeat and despair, but to a hope which is eternal, to an inheritance which will endure beyond the grave. . . . It shall be *incorruptible*, like the God and Father who bestows it. *Eternal*, it shall contain within it no seed of decay, nothing which can cause it to perish. Neither shall it be subject to injury from without. It shall be *undefiled*, for we are to share it with our elder Brother, our High-priest, who is now made higher than the heavens. Earthly possessions are often sullied, now by the way they are attained, now by the way they are used. Neither spot nor blemish shall tarnish the beauty of the heavenly inheritance. It shall *never fade away*. It is amaranthine, like the crown of glory which the chief Shepherd shall bestow at His appearing; it is as the unwithering flowers of paradise. — *Lumby*: St. Peter, pp. 17-20.

SUFFERING FOR CONSCIENCE'S SAKE.

§ 728. **The Need of Patience and Hope in Suffering.** The suffering Christians needed no impassioned arguments or eager dialectics; they mainly needed to be taught the blessed lessons of resignation and of hope. These are the key-notes of St. Peter's Epistle. As they stood defenceless before their enemies, he points them to the patient and speechless anguish of the Lamb of God. Patient endurance in the present would enable them to set an example even to their enemies; the hope of the future would change their very sorrow into exultant triumph. In the great battle which had been set in array against them, Hope should be their helmet and Innocence their shield. — *Farrar*: Early Days, p. 73.

§ 729. **The Example of Christ's Humility.** He Who is God, stooped to be born in the womb of His Mother, and waited patiently and grew up; and when grown up, was not impatient to be recognized as God. He was baptized by His servant, and repelled the tempter only by words. When He became a Teacher, He did *not strive nor cry, nor did any one hear His voice in the streets*. He did *not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax*. He scorned no man's company; He shunned no man's table. He conversed with publicans and sinners.

He poured out water and washed His disciples' feet. He would not injure the Samaritan village which did not receive Him, when His disciples called fire from heaven to consume it. He cured the unthankful; He withdrew from those who plotted against Him. He had the traitor constantly in His company and did not expose him. And when He is betrayed and is brought to execution, He is *like a sheep which before his shearers is dumb, and a lamb that doth not open its mouth*. He who, Lord of angelic Legions, did not approve the sword of Peter drawn in His defence, He is spit upon, scourged, mocked. Such long-suffering as His, is an example to all men, but is found in God alone. — *Mombert*: In Lange's Commentary, 1 Peter, p. 466.

NO SHAME IN SUFFERING AS CHRISTIANS.

§ 730. **Suffering as a Christian.** The Apostle now goes one step farther in his exhortations. The brethren are suffering for Christ's cause, and may draw comfort from Christ's example, and be encouraged to patience under their persecutions. But these very sufferings, He would have them see, are God's judgment on His servants in this world, that they may be counted worthy of the kingdom of God, for which they are called to suffer. They must be watchful not to deserve punishment for offences that bring disgrace on themselves and on the cause of Christ. . . . To suffer for such things would disgrace the Christian name; but there is no shame in suffering as a Christian, but rather a reason for giving glory to God. That the name was bestowed as a reproach seems probable from Acts 11: 26, and still more from the mocking tone in which it is used by Agrippa. . . .

But if a man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God in this name. That is, let him be thankful and show his thankfulness that he has been called to bear the name of Christ and to suffer for it. . . . St. Paul congratulates the Philippians "because to them it has been granted, in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on Him, but also to suffer on His behalf"; and to another Church he declares that his own tribulations, endured for their sakes, ought to be to them a glory, because they made known how precious those believers were in the sight of their heavenly Father for whose sake He allowed another to be afflicted that they might be drawn more effectually unto Him. And if this be so, how much cause have they to bless and glorify God who may be permitted to think that He is using their afflictions for a like purpose. — *Lumby*: St. Peter, pp. 189-191.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 731. **Sympathy Springing from Personal Experience.** Though Peter's early experiences were painful at the time, they made his admonitions doubly effective, and enabled him to "strengthen the brethren." Our severest experiences train us to perform the needful task of helping others in like trials.

§ 732. **The Difference Between a Dead and a Living Hope.** Multitudes, when asked if they have a hope of heaven, unhesitatingly answer, Yes. But unless this hope proves its existence and power through a life of obedience, faith and love, it is a dead hope, that is, a mere desire to escape the pains and penalties of sin, without abandoning sin itself. Such was the hope of the unbelieving Jews who, irrespective of personal character, regarded themselves as heirs of the kingdom of God, merely because they were descendants of Abraham. In contrast with this stands the Christian's living hope, which rests on a solid foundation of what God has done for us and in us, and which effects a moral transformation of the whole man.

§ 733. "Kept by the Power of God." A Christian is as sheep in the midst of wolves. That he does not stray away and suffer everlasting loss is not due to his own strength or vigilance, but to the fact that God surrounds him, as the word "kept" implies, like a body-guard. No foe can approach him who is thus kept.

§ 734. **Suffering as a Christian.** Peter esteemed it an honor to suffer the misrepresentation and calumny heaped by pagans on those who bore the name of Christian. He made a distinction, however, between suffering the righteous deserts of one's own misdoings, and suffering innocently for Christ's sake. It is well to distinguish between the ills that come upon us as the results of our own evil deeds, and those sent by God to fit us more thoroughly for his service.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PETER IN LATER TRADITIONS, AND IN APOCRYPHAL LITERATURE: *Ency. Brit.*, vol. xviii, Art., "Peter," pp. 696, 697; *Farrar*, *Early Days of Christianity*, pp. 63-66; *Cambridge Bible*, St. Peter, pp. 1-60. 2. THE FIRST EPISTLE OF PETER: *Smith's Dict. Bib.*, Art., "Peter (First Epistle)," pp. 2455-2457a; *Ency. Brit.*, vol. xviii, Art., "Peter, Epistles of," p. 697. 3. PETER'S EPISTLES BORN OF HIS OWN EXPERIENCE: *Cambridge Bible*, St. Peter, pp. 26 ff. 4. ANALYSIS OF 1 PETER: *Cambridge Companion*, p. 82; *Cambridge Bible*, St. Peter, pp. 64, 65. 5. COMPARISON OF 1 PETER WITH OTHER EPISTLES: *Cambridge Bible*, St. Peter, pp. 65-72.

Lesson 43. — THE CHURCHES INVADED BY NEW ERRORS. Warnings against Self-conceit and Lawlessness.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 735. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the nature of the corruptions that were threatening or had actually invaded the churches to which the epistles of Jude and 2 Peter were addressed, and to show the considerations by which the writers of these epistles sought to warn against these evils and to counteract their influence.

§ 736. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Call attention to the authorship and authenticity of the epistle of Jude, the close parallelism between it and 2 Peter, and the question which was written first.

(2) Notice that Jude quotes from the apocryphal book of Enoch; note the history and contents of this book, and consider whether such a quotation should invalidate the inspiration of the epistle which contains it.

(3) Call attention to the fact that although in the lesson the authenticity of 2 Peter has been taken for granted, yet the authorship of this epistle has been more questioned than that of any other New Testament writing; that the evidence for and against it is so evenly balanced that the most cautious and conservative scholars feel compelled to suspend judgment upon the question; and that no certain time or place can be assigned to its composition beyond the fact that, if it was written by Peter, it must have been shortly before his death.

(4) Show the nature of the evils against which these two epistles were directed

— that it seems to have been less doctrinal than practical — a gross corruption of the moral life under the guise, apparently, of superior liberty and wisdom.

(5) Point out that both writers met these errors by showing from history and tradition how a just and holy God had punished such outbreaks of evil in the past, and those who now embraced them might expect nothing less than similar destructive judgments upon themselves.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO JUDE AND 2 PETER.

§ 737. *The Epistle of Jude.* (1) *Authorship.* — The author of this Epistle calls himself in vs. 1, the slave of Jesus Christ and the brother of James. . . . Those who see in that James, the Apostle James, son of Alphæus, regard our Writer as the Apostle Jude, also the son of Alphæus: the “Judas not Iscariot” of John 14: 22. Those, on the other hand, who see in that James, not one of the Twelve, but the actual (maternal) brother of our Lord, the son of Joseph and Mary, regard our Writer as the Judas of Matt. 13: 55, another brother of our Lord, and a younger son of Joseph and Mary. . . . This latter is the view here taken. . . .

Of this Judas, one of the Lord’s brethren, we know nothing from early ecclesiastical tradition. . . . In this defect of our knowledge of the personal history of the Writer, we can only say that he, like his greater brother St. James, did not believe on our Lord during His ministry, but became a convert after the resurrection. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, Jude, Prolegomena, pp. 188–190. See also *Plummer*: St. Jude, ch. 30.

(2) *Authenticity.* — [The Epistle of Jude] is not mentioned or quoted by any of the Apostolic Fathers, Clement, Ignatius, Polycarp, nor in the Epistle of Barnabas. . . . Tertullian quotes it as the work of an Apostle. . . . Eusebius places it among the . . . disputed books, and Jerome mentions that although then received, it had been rejected by many on account of its quoting the Apocryphal Book of Enoch. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Jude, p. 89.

In later times, the Epistle has been generally received as authentic. . . . The fact that doubts were entertained respecting the authenticity of the Epistle in early times, and that we do not find many traces of its use in the primitive Fathers, may easily be accounted for from its shortness, from its special character, from its presumed reference to apocryphal sources, from its apparently not being written by an Apostle. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, Jude, Prolegomena, pp. 191, 192.

(3) *To whom Written; Occasion and Object of the Epistle.* — There is nothing in the salutation to help us to identify the readers for whom this Epistle was intended. It is clear, however, from the rest of the letter, that they were well known to St. Jude. They had at one time been pupils of apostles, but now that by death or absence they had lost apostolic guidance, they were in serious danger from the presence among them of men who, while railing ostentatiously against the objects of pagan superstition, gave themselves up to all the licentiousness of pagan worship, declaring themselves, owing to their special illumination, to be above all law, and practising the vilest immorality under cover of some hideous perversion of the doctrine of the grace of God. St. Jude writes to rouse his “beloved” to a sense of their danger and at the same time to help them to meet it calmly, because they had been taught to expect it, and because, while doing

what they could to help their brethren through it, they were safe in God's keeping. — *Murray*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 83a.

(4) *Parallelism between Jude and 2 Peter; Jude the Earlier Work.* — The parallelism between 2 Pet., ch. 2, and the Epistle of St. Jude lies on the surface. There is sufficient resemblance to make it certain that one writer knew the work of the other, sufficient difference to show that he exercised a certain measure of independence in dealing with the materials thus placed within his reach. The following considerations lead, it is believed, to the inference that St. Jude's Epistle was the earlier of the two.

(a) It was more likely that St. Peter should incorporate the contents of a short Epistle like that of St. Jude, in the longer one which he was writing, than that St. Jude, with the whole of St. Peter's Second Epistle before him, should have confined himself to one section of it only.

(b) It was more probable that St. Peter, in reproducing St. Jude, should, as stated above, have thought it expedient to omit this or that passage which might seem to him likely to take their place among things "hard to understand" or prove stumbling-blocks to the weak, than that Jude should have added these elements to what he found written by St. Peter. — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Jude, p. 88.

(5) *The Book of Enoch, Referred to in Jude.* — St. Jude's reference to the prophecy of Enoch does not necessarily prove that he was acquainted with the book, but it at least shows the existence of traditions that had gathered round the patriarch's name. . . . The first Church writer who seems really to have known it [the book of Enoch] is Tertullian. . . . In 1773 . . . Bruce, the Abyssinian explorer, brought over three copies which he had found in the course of his travels, and one of these . . . was translated by Archbishop Lawrence and published in 1821. . . . The book thus brought to light after an interval of some fourteen hundred years, bears no certain evidence of date, and has been variously assigned by different scholars; by Ewald to B.C. 144–120, by Dillmann to B.C. 110, while other scholars have been led by its reference to the Messiah to ascribe a post-Christian origin to it. As regards its contents, it is a sufficiently strange farrago. The one passage which specially concerns us is found in ch. 2, and is thus rendered by Archbishop Lawrence. It comes as a part of the first vision of Enoch: God will be manifested and the mountains shall melt in the flame and then, "Behold he comes with ten thousand of his saints to execute judgment upon them, and to reprove all the carnal for everything which the wicked and ungodly have done and committed against him." In chs. 7, 8 we have the legend of the loves of the angels and the birth of the giants and the invention of arts and sciences. Then comes a prophecy of the deluge (ch. 10), and visions of the city of God (ch. 14), and the names of the seven angels (ch. 20). He sees the dwelling-place of the dead, both good and evil (ch. 22), and the tree of life which had been in Eden (ch. 24), and a field beyond the Erythræan Sea in which is the tree of knowledge. Vision follows upon vision, until in ch. 46 we have a reproduction of that in Dan., ch. 7 of the Ancient of Days in the Son of Man, who is identified with the Messiah (ch. 47), the Chosen One of God. . . . The Book of Enoch . . . belongs to the class of writings in which the decay of Judaism was but too prolific, on which St. Paul seems to pass a final sentence when he speaks of them as "old wives' fables." — *Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Jude, pp. 216, 217. See also *Plummer*: St. Jude, pp. 433–441.

§ 738. **Second Epistle of Peter.** (1) *Authenticity.* — The Second Epistle ascribed to St. Peter comes before us, as far as external evidence is concerned, somewhat heavily weighted. Origen (circ. A.D. 230) is the earliest writer who

names it, and in doing so, he admits that its authority was questioned. . . . Doubts lingered in Asia Minor and Syria, and were expressed by Gregory of Nazianzus and Theodore of Mopsuetia. These, however, gradually gave way, and the Epistle appeared in the . . . later Syrian version, and was received into the Canon by the Councils of Laodicea (A.D. 372) and Carthage (A.D. 397). . . .

. . . We turn to the internal evidence, and here again there is, at first sight, an impression unfavourable to its genuineness. The opening description which the writer gives of himself is different from that of the First Epistle. So also is the general language and tenor of thought. . . . It remains to be seen, however, how far a more thorough examination of the Epistle confirms or balances these conclusions. And here we have to deal with a large number of circumstantial details, each of them, it may be, comparatively inconclusive in itself, and yet tending, in their accumulated weight, to turn the scale . . . in favour of the later acceptance of the Second Epistle by the Church at large, as against the earlier doubts.

It may be added finally, that these doubts themselves, and the consequent delay in the acceptance, were what might have been expected under the circumstances of the case. A time of persecution necessarily interrupted the free communication of one Church with another. . . . Nor must we forget that the false teachers who were condemned by the Epistle had an interest in suppressing it as far as that suppression lay within their power. . . . It would not be strange that they should throw doubts on its authorship, and that those doubts should gain a certain degree of currency and be reproduced even by those who had not the same motive for suggesting them.—*Plumptre*: In Cambridge Bible, St. Peter, pp. 73-75, 81. See also *Bleek*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 172-176.

(2) *Time and Place of Writing*.—These can only be set down conjecturally. . . . Assuming the genuineness of the Epistle, St. Peter wrote it in his old age, when he was expecting his death. This . . . would be somewhere about the year 68 A.D., and the place of writing would be Rome, or somewhere on the journey thither from the East.

But all this is far too uncertain, and too much beset with chronological difficulties, to be regarded as anything more than a hypothetical corollary, contingent on our accepting the tradition of St. Peter's Roman martyrdom.—*Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, 2 Peter, Prolegomena, p. 158.

(3) *Object of the Epistle*.—This Epistle is designed to be a hortatory memorial addressed to believers, standing and already established in the truth, as appears plainly from 2 Pet. 1:12, 15. The first Epistle deals with warnings against dangers and enemies from without; the second warns Christians against the more dangerous enemies from within, and exhorts them to vigilance and resistance to the deceivers and scoffers, who had gradually crept into the Christian churches. . . . The motives to a holy life are chiefly taken from the consideration of the nearness of the coming of Christ and the catastrophes connected with that event.

The deceivers against whom Peter warns his readers, are described not so much intellectually as morally. They are men of the Sadducee cast of mind, libertines, antinomists, living in uncleanness, unrighteousness and covetousness, according to the promptings of their own lusts. . . . They used great swelling words of vanity, spoke evil of dignities and the celestial powers, and derided the Lord that bought them. Their wisdom consisted in lying, blaspheming, and the promise of unbridled license. Here we may discern the roots of the antinomistic Gnosis. . . . The author predicts their appearance, and prophetically sees them already extant. Their false knowledge is opposed by the vital knowledge of Christ, on which great stress is laid in this Epistle.—*Mombert*: In Lange's Commentary, 2 Peter, p. 3.

WARNINGS AGAINST SELF-CONCEIT AND LAWLESSNESS.

§ 739. **Errorists against whom Jude Warns Christians.** In the inscription with its invocation of a blessing the author . . . explains that an exhortation to contend against every danger threatening the faith common to them with all the saints, forms the substance of his epistle; certain men having appeared, whom on account of their perversion of the fundamental truths of Christianity, he already finds condemned in Old Testament Scripture as ungodly. He reminds them of three well-known examples of Divine punishment and calls down upon such as defile and destroy themselves with fleshly sins, after the example of those who were overtaken by these judgments, emancipating themselves from all that is called dominion and speaking evil of dignities of whose nature they are entirely ignorant, a woe that again recalls three prominent examples of Old Testament sinners.

From the way in which they recklessly desecrate without fear the love-feasts with rioting, he shows in heightened imagery that they are not what they profess to be, but are entirely devoid of spiritual life; that their nature impelled by wild passion attests their own shame and can only end in destruction, which he foretells in the words of the threat pronounced by Enoch on the ungodly of his time; finally setting forth the twofold contrariety of their nature, in accordance with which they murmur against God, although by their licentious life they prepare their own fate; and make boastful speeches, though ready to cringe before those from whom they expect advantage. He recalls words of the Apostles foretelling the appearance of frivolous mockers who should walk after their own ungodly lusts, and not without irony characterizes them as those who separate themselves although in reality they are psychists, not having the Spirit. . . .

It is not against individual moral errors or imperfections in the Christian life that the Epistle is directed; but the conduct of these men is represented throughout as fundamentally godless and immoral. We see clearly from vs. 3 that they misinterpreted the doctrine of grace as a charter for a licentious life, . . . assuming that those who were in a state of grace were emancipated from all external rule, and thus free not only from the Old Testament law but also from every new rule of life given by Christ. . . . As a matter of fact we find them to be libertines on principle, who, unable or disinclined to enter more deeply into questions of doctrine, were content to have justified their immorality by an appeal to their unshaken state of grace and their enlightened spiritual Christianity. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 118, 119, 121, 122. See also *Plummer*: St. Jude, ch. 32.

§ 740. **Heretics against whom Peter Warns Christians.** The occasion of his writing proceeded from Gentile-Christian circles and was operative in them. For there can be no question that it is the professed libertines of the Epistle of Jude who are attacked in 2 Pet., ch. 2. In the circles to which the author's attention is directed, or at the time in which he writes, these libertines had already gone the length of making a zealous propaganda on behalf of their principles; and had moreover found the catchword by which to allure the Christians, professing to be the first to give true Christian freedom, however empty their great swelling words might be. They had also already begun to confirm this false freedom by a misrepresentation of Old Testament Scripture and Pauline letters. For this reason the Apostle feared that worse might follow. These pernicious principles could not fail to be gradually developed into a formal heresy, which by its seductive lustre and the zeal with which from interested motives it was disseminated, gained a large following and thus directly led to divisions in the Church. . . .

There can be no question that in his description of the libertines in 2 Pet., ch. 2, the author had the description of them in the Epistle of Jude before his mind. . . . The examples there adduced are widely expanded, prominence being given to entirely new aspects of them other than those which originally led to their being chosen. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 155-157.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 741. **Some Modern Antinomians.** It is a matter of constant observation that licentious men and rum-sellers, who for sensual gratification or pecuniary gain destroy the bodies and souls of men, are the first to cry out against the legal restraints that society imposes for its own protection. Bloodthirsty wolves are they who champion their own liberty to tear and devour the sheep, and the liberty of the sheep to be torn and devoured.

§ 742. **The Conceit that Accompanies Wickedness.** Men who are bold enough to set their own wills over the will of God as the supreme law of conduct, are also foremost to parade their false freedom and independence, "uttering great swelling words of vanity." Good wine needs no bush. Genuine merit does not trumpet its virtues on the street corners. The most perfect liberty, which is the most perfect obedience to law, shows itself, not in bray and bluster, but in the beauty and perfection of the results attained through it.

§ 743. **Growing in Grace.** Christianity is a life, and not a mere system of rules or doctrines. Life means growth, expansion, maturity of power and function. For a living organism to continue undeveloped, argues an abnormal obstruction to the law of life. A babe sixty years old is a monstrosity either in the nursery or in the church.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. AUTHOR AND READERS OF THE EPISTLE OF JUDE: *Meyer*, Commentary, Peter and Jude, pp. 381-383. 2. OBJECT AND CONTENTS OF THE EPISTLE; TIME AND PLACE OF ITS COMPOSITION: *Ibid.*, pp. 383-386. 3. OCCASION, CHARACTER, AND CONTENTS OF 2 PETER: *Ibid.*, pp. 251-260. 4. THE AUTHENTICITY OF 2 PETER: *Ibid.*, pp. 260-286. 5. THE ASSUMPTION OF MOSES; MICHAEL THE ARCH-ANGEL: Cambridge Bible, St. Jude, pp. 206, 207; *Plummer*, St. Jude, pp. 419-425. 6. ANGELOLOGY AMONG JEWISH CHRISTIANS: *Neander*, Planting and Training, pp. 299, 300, 361; *Lange*, Commentary, Jude, p. 18.

Lesson 44.—THE SEVEN CHURCHES IN ASIA MINOR AFTER THE DEATH OF PAUL. Commendations and Rebukes.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 744. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the general meaning of the book of Revelation; its relation to the time in which it was written, and in particular the condition of the seven churches in Asia Minor to which it was addressed.

§ 745. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Obtain as clear a view as possible of the condition of the world about the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. That given in Farrar's "*Early Days of Christianity*" is extremely vivid, and particularly valuable as bearing upon the subject of this lesson.

(2) Get a conception also of the nature and purpose of the apocalyptic literature of the Jews, the relation of the book of Revelation to this literature, the reasons for dating it just before the destruction of Jerusalem, and the significance of the book in view of the events then occurring or impending.

(3) Call attention to the light thrown by the messages to the seven churches upon their external and religious condition about the year A.D. 70, and to the fact that their condition probably reflects that of many other Christian churches at that time.

(4) Note that notwithstanding the obscurity of many portions of the book of Revelation and the difficulty of interpreting its visions and symbols, it has, almost beyond any other book in the New Testament, been a source of comfort and strength to those in trial.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 746. **Condition of the World.** (1) *The Revolt of Judea, and the Capture of Jerusalem.* — The last procurator, Gessius Florus, A.D. 64-66, was also the worst. . . . He plundered not only individuals, but even communities, and laid deliberate schemes of iniquity for reaping his harvest of plunder. Many towns and villages were entirely deserted, and when the governor of Syria visited Jerusalem three millions of suppliant Jews entreated his interference, only to see Florus standing by his side and mocking at their complaints. By such outrages the cup of the people's sorrow was filled to the brim, and it needed only a spark to kindle the conflagration, the materials for which had long been gathering.

The fatal flame broke out in A.D. 66 at Caesarea, where the heathen populace drove the Jews from the city after an edict of Nero had condemned them to forfeit the rights of Roman citizens. The consequent rebellion extended in every direction. . . .

Titus at the head of four legions and numerous auxiliary troops arrived before the walls of the Holy City a few days before the Passover, A.D. 70. Vast multitudes were assembled at the time within the walls to keep the Feast, and the rival factions seemed bent on destroying one another instead of making head against the common foe. Famine and pestilence raged fearfully, and hundreds of thousands of dead bodies were thrown over the walls. After Titus had penetrated the outer walls, many of the Jews retired to the Temple, which resembled a fortified place. Extremely anxious to save the Temple, Titus gave strict orders that it should be spared. But a soldier threw a blazing brand into the building, and all efforts to extinguish the fire were in vain.

Titus would at the last moment have checked the fury of his troops. But the legionaries, maddened by the length of the siege, flung each his torch into the midst of the splendid pile, and hurried to the work of carnage. The slaughter was terrible. The splendid Temple was consumed by flames, and not one stone was left upon another (Mt. 24: 2). The upper city was taken some weeks afterwards, and then the whole was levelled with the ground. More than one million of Jews perished in this war, and more than 90,000 prisoners were sold as slaves, or reserved for gladiatorial exhibitions. — *Maclear*: In *Helps to the Study of the Bible*, pp. 225, 226.

(2) *A Glance at the Heathen World when the Apocalypse was Written.* — *Physically*, men seemed to be tormented and terrified with catastrophes and

portents. . . . In Rome a pestilence had carried off tens of thousands of the citizens. A disastrous inundation of the Tiber had impeded the march of Otho's troops, and encumbered the roads with ruins. In Lydia an encroachment of the sea had wrought fearful havoc. In Asia city after city had been shattered to the dust by earthquakes. . . . *Morally*, the . . . Pagan world . . . was sunk so low that, in the opinion of the Pagan moralists of the Empire, posterity could but imitate and could not surpass such a virulence of degradation. . . . *Socially*, we see how desperate was the condition alike of Jews and Pagans, in St. Paul, St. James, and Josephus on the one hand, and in Tacitus, Suetonius, and the Satirists on the other. *Politically*, the whole Empire was in a state of agitation. . . . The obscurity which hung about the death of Nero, . . . and the prophecies which had always been current about his complete restoration, . . . gained [a false Nero] many adherents, and caused wide-spread alarm. . . . Thus alike the Jewish and the heathen world, each at the nadir of their degradation and impiety, were bent upon the destruction of Christ's little flock; and even into that little flock had intruded many who came in sheep's clothing, though inwardly they were ravening wolves.

Such were "the signs of the times" during the course of these awful years in which St. John found himself on the rocky isle "that is called Patmos," and uttered his prophecies respecting the past, the present, and the immediate future. In those prophecies we see the aspect of the age as it presented itself to the inspired mind of a Christian and an Apostle. — *Farrar*: Early Days of Christianity, pp. 425, 426, 428.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO REVELATION.

§ 747. **Apocalyptic Literature.** The Greek title of this book, *apokalypsis*, connects it with the branch of Jewish and early Christian literature known as Apocalyptic. Both in time and in character this literature was differentiated from the Prophetic. It arose after the cessation of Old Testament prophecy, and under the stress of foreign oppression. At each critical period of their country's history, and when the people were becoming hopeless, the Apocalyptists sought to revive their courage by assuring them of the speedy approach of the Messiah, and His overthrow of all their oppressions. The end was at hand; its signs were already visible.

Apocalyptic literature . . . also bore direct reference to the existing circumstances of God's people; and as these circumstances, the oppressors and deliverance of Israel, could not be alluded to explicitly and by name, they were compelled to use a system of symbols which renders their writings obscure and sometimes repulsive to a modern reader. . . . Having no authority of their own, the Apocalyptists frequently borrowed the authority of a great name, and issued their writings under the name of Enoch, Noah, Moses, Isaiah or Ezra. . . . The Apocalypse of John, though belonging to this branch of literature and betraying its characteristics, is so unique in form, contents and spirit, as to justify its separation as canonical from the non-canonical apocalypses. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 235, 236.

§ 748. **Genuineness.** Of its genuineness, as one of the writings of St. John, there is most satisfactory evidence. It is quoted with the author's name earlier than any other book of the New Testament, with the exception of St. Paul's First Epistle to the Corinthians. Justin Martyr ascribes it to St. John; Irenæus, the disciple of Polycarp, testifies to the Apostle's authorship, and states that he himself received the explanation of a passage in it from those who conversed with the Apostle about it. — *Maclear*: In Helps to the Study of the Bible, p. 176.

§ 749. **Date of Composition.** There is a serious difference of opinion as to the date of its production. The common opinion is based almost entirely on a statement by Irenæus, who was a pupil of the personal disciples of St. John, to the effect that 'it' (*i.e.* apparently 'the Revelation') 'was seen almost in his own time, at the end of the reign of Domitian' (96 A.D.). There are various traces, however, of a different tradition, notably in Epiphanius, which connects St. John's exile to Patmos, and by implication the writing of the Revelation, with the persecution of Nero (64-68).

This earlier date seems imperatively demanded by internal evidence. The difference in style for instance between the Revelation and the Gospel requires a substantial difference in date of composition, if we are to maintain, as we have otherwise strong grounds for maintaining, the unity of their authorship. . . . The strongest argument of all lies in the fact that a book which has seemed to so many, when interpreted on the hypothesis of the later date, a dark and all but hopeless enigma, becomes, when once the earlier date is accepted, what it was clearly meant to be, a luminous and most inspiring revelation. — *Murray*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 84*b*.

§ 750. **Interpretation of the Book.** In 68, 69 A.D. Jerusalem was already invested by the Roman legions. The tremendous crisis was now close at hand which, according to our Lord's express prediction, was to mark His return in judgement on the guilty nation. In spite of His warning, men might fail to recognise Him when He came, because He did not manifest Himself in a visible form. They might think, especially if they were still in heart bound to the outward aids to worship afforded by Judaism, that the Fall of Jerusalem was a sign that God had finally withdrawn from, and not that He had at last wedded Himself to, the creatures He had made. They needed . . . clear words to help them to understand that 'state of salvation,' that 'new heaven and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness,' which His coming was to introduce.

It will be noticed that on this interpretation the primary application of the words of this prophecy is to events that lay in the immediate future at the time that it was delivered. And this is certainly what the language of the book itself most naturally suggests. Nor is there anything in the book necessarily inconsistent with this interpretation. 'Babylon,' that is, the old Jerusalem, fell, and vengeance for the righteous blood that she had shed was exacted from her in 70 A.D. . . . There is only one short section which seems expressly to contemplate a far distant crisis in the history of the world. The value of the book for us will lie therefore primarily in the help which it can give us towards understanding a certain definite series of historical events in the past. If we read these events in the light which this book casts upon them, we shall learn to understand the principles, and in some degree the methods, of the judgement which Christ comes to execute on the world. — *Murray*: In Cambridge Companion, p. 84*b*.

§ 751. **Object of the Book.** The Apocalypse declares its own object to be mainly prophetic; the exhibition to God's servants of things which must shortly come to pass. And to this by far the larger portion of the book is devoted. . . . Intermixed however with this prophetic development, we have a course of hortatory and encouraging sayings, arising out of the state of the churches to which the book is written, and addressed through them to the church universal. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, Revelation, Prolegomena, p. 241.

JOHN'S VISION OF THE GLORIFIED CHRIST.

§ 752. **The Vision of the "Son of Man."** It was a splendid vision which was . . . presented to his eyes. The golden candlestick, first of the Tabernacle

and then of the Temple, was one of the gorgeous articles of furniture in God's holy house. . . . The seven golden candlesticks, or as in vs. 4 the one in seven, represent the Church, as she burns in the secret place of the Most High. But we are not invited to dwell upon the Church. Something greater attracts the eye, — He who is "like unto a Son of man." . . . It is the humanness of our Lord's Person more than the Person Himself, or rather it is the Person in His humanness, to which the words of the original direct us. . . .

The particulars of the description indicate the official position of the Person spoken of, and the character in which He appears. (1) He is a priest, clothed with the long white garment reaching to the feet that was a distinguishing part of the priestly dress, but at the same time so wearing the girdle at the breasts, not at the waist, as to show that He was a priest engaged in the active service of the sanctuary. (2) He is a king, for, with the exception of the last mentioned particular, all the other features of the description given of Him point to kingly rather than to priestly power. . . . The "Son of man," . . . here brought before us in His heavenly glory, is both Priest and King.

Not only so. It is even of particular importance to observe that the attributes with which the Priest-King is clothed are not so much those of tenderness and mercy as those of power and majesty, inspiring the beholder with a sense of awe and with the fear of judgment. . . . The hair of a glistening whiteness which, like snow on which the sun is shining, it almost pains the eye to look upon; those eyes penetrating like a flame of fire into the inmost recesses of the heart; those feet which like metal raised to a white heat in a furnace consume in an instant whatever they tread upon in anger; that voice loud and continuous, like the sound of the mighty sea as it booms along the shore; that sword sharp, two-edged, issuing from the mouth, so that no one can escape it when it is drawn to slay; and lastly that countenance like the sun in the height of a tropical sky, when man and beast cower from the irresistible scorching of his beams, — all are symbolical of judgment. Eager to save, the exalted High Priest is yet also mighty to destroy. . . .

The Apostle felt all this; and, believer as he was in Jesus, convinced of his Master's love, and one who returned that love with the warmest affections of his heart, he was yet overwhelmed with terror. — *Milligan* : Revelation, pp. 14-17.

CHRIST'S MESSAGES TO THE SEVEN CHURCHES OF ASIA.

§ 753. **The Seven Churches and their Origin.** The seven Churches to which the Apocalypse is addressed (Rev. 1 : 11) are the Churches of Proconsular Asia, in whose capital, Ephesus, Paul had worked so long, and where, since it is placed first, the Apostle John seems to have his abode. Then follow Smyrna, situated somewhat to the north in the territory of what was formerly Ionia; Mysian Pergamus still farther to the north; then in a south-easterly line the three Lydian cities Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia; and finally Laodicea in Phrygia. It is generally taken for granted that all these Churches must directly or indirectly be regarded as Pauline foundations; but this is by no means certain, for there were also in olden times Jewish-Christian Church-foundations in anterior Asia (1 Pet. 1 : 1). — *Weiss* : Introduction, New Test., vol ii, p. 77.

§ 754. **The Religious Condition of these Churches.** The inner relations presupposed by the letters addressed to them, show their Christian life in a state of decline and thus point to the later part of the Apostolic period. Ephesus has relaxed in zealous Christian brotherly love (Rev. 2 : 4); Laodicea has become lukewarm; in over-estimating its Christian position it has given up earnest striving (3 : 15 ff.); Sardis is for the most part dead, lacking vigorous proof of a Christian

state (3: 1 ff.). These very phenomena lead to the inference that some time had elapsed since the Apostle Paul had left his former field of activity; and that the Churches had been without definite Apostolic guidance; that John therefore had not had his home in them for long. But the most suspicious thing was the appearance of apostles having a tendency to libertinism, who not only declared the eating of flesh offered to idols, but also fornication, to be permissible. . . . This is easily explained by misapprehension and abuse of the Pauline doctrine of freedom in Gentile-Christian circles, such as might readily take place after the Apostle had withdrawn from his field of work. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 77, 78.

§ 755. **Their External Condition.** As to the external condition of the Christians, the Churches of Smyrna and Philadelphia, which must have been preponderatingly Jewish-Christian, had much to suffer from the synagogue. The former, like the Churches to which the Hebrew Epistle is addressed, had been obliged to suffer slanders, loss of property and imprisonment (Rev. 2: 9 f.); the latter had not only borne the enmity of the synagogue with patience, but in spite of its unimportance had begun a successful mission therein (3: 8 f.). Pergamus in particular had suffered persecution from the hands of the heathen; and during an outbreak of heathen fanaticism against the Christians, Antipas, a prominent member of the Church, had been slain (2: 13). — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 79, 80.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 756. **The Living Christ in the Midst of His Churches.** As the risen and glorified Christ walked in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, so he walks in the midst of his churches to-day to guide, reprove, condemn, comfort, praise, or strengthen, according to their several deserts or needs.

§ 757. **The Intolerable Nature of Spiritual Lukewarmness.** The church at Laodicea was spewed out, because it was neither hot nor cold. Active opposition to religion is more hopeful than blank indifference; the former argues an interest of some sort, as in the case of Saul of Tarsus, which may only need enlightenment to be transformed into a most potent agency for good.

§ 758. **The Presence of Christ in the Church the Pledge of her Victory.** It was he whose "countenance was as the sun shineth in his strength," who said, "I am the first and the last, and the Living one; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive for evermore, and I have the keys of death and of Hades"; therefore "the gates of Hades shall not prevail against" his church. The "seven stars" are in his own right hand, and none shall quench their shining.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. PATMOS: Ency. Brit., vol. xviii, Art., "Patmos," p. 408. 2. THE REVELATION TO WHOM ADDRESSED: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. iv, Revelation, Prolegomena, pp. 236-240. 3. THE SEVEN CHURCHES: Cambridge Bible, Revelation, pp. 11-29. 4. STANDPOINT FROM WHICH TO VIEW THE APOCALYPSE: *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, pp. 428-431. 5. SYSTEMS OF INTERPRETATION: *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. iv, Revelation, Prolegomena, pp. 245-260; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, p. 435. 6. ANALYSIS OF THE BOOK: Cambridge Bible, Revelation, pp. 58-60; *Schaff-Herzog's Ency.*, vol. iii, Art., "Revelation, Book of," pp. 2036, 2037; *Journal of Biblical Literature*, vol. xiii, 1894, pp. 91-100. 7. THE PROLOGUE: *Milligan*, Revelation, ch. 1; Cambridge Bible, Revelation, pp. 3-7. 8. THE CHURCH ON THE FIELD OF HISTORY: *Milligan*, Revelation, ch. 2. 9. HERESY OF THE NICOLAITANS AN OUTGROWTH OF Gnosticism: *Lewin*, Life and Epistles of St. Paul, vol. ii, pp. 252, 253.

NOTES AND LIBRARY EXTRACTS
ON
THE OUTLINE INDUCTIVE COURSE
THE HISTORY OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH

**Lesson 45. — THE PASSING AWAY OF THE TEMPLE AND THE
SACRIFICES. Jewish Christians Instructed in View of the
Destruction of Jerusalem.**

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 759. **Design of the Lesson.** To show how the destruction of Jerusalem and the passing away of the temple and the sacrifices would naturally affect the Jewish Christians of that day, and how the writer of the epistle to the Hebrews met this difficulty by teaching them what was transient, and what permanent, in their faith.

§ 760. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Call attention to the fact that while this epistle in the title even of the Revised Version is accredited to St. Paul, and that while many yet cling to the Pauline authorship, this has been given up by the great majority of Christian scholars, who, while they may not agree in their conjectures as to the author, agree unhesitatingly that he was not Paul.

(2) Note the readers whom the author has in mind, his purpose in addressing them, and what this suggests as to the time when the epistle was written.

(3) After calling attention to the writer's purpose, take a rapid survey of his argument, and show the steps by which he attained his purpose. Emphasize also the fact that the lesson dwells only on the opening and the close of the argument.

(4) Mark the significance of the author's demonstration from the Old Testament of the superiority of Christ to the angels; and note the reasons given for our Lord's assumption of humanity.

(5) Show how the argument culminates in a most remarkable demonstration of the superiority of the priesthood and sacrifice of Christ to those of the temple, the latter being only the type and the former were the eternal reality.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO HEBREWS.

§ 761. **The Epistle to the Hebrews.** (1) *The Title.* — The New Testament writing usually known under this name, or less correctly as the Epistle of

Paul the Apostle to the Hebrews, bears in the oldest MSS. no other title than the words "To the Hebrews." This brief heading embraces the whole information as to the origin of the epistle on which Christian tradition is unanimous. Everything else — the authorship, the address, the date — was unknown or disputed in the early church, and continues to form matter of dispute in the present day. But as far back as the latter part of the 2d century the destination of the epistle "to the Hebrews" was acknowledged alike in Alexandria, where it was ascribed to Paul, and in Carthage, where it passed by the name of Barnabas, and no indication exists that it ever circulated under another title. — *Smith*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xi, Art., "Hebrews, Epistle to the," p. 602b.

(2) *To whom Written.* — It is generally agreed that the church addressed was composed of Hebrews or Christians of Jewish birth. We are not entitled to take this simply on the authority of the title, which is hardly more than a reflexion of the impression produced on an early copyist. But it is plain that the writer is at one with his readers in approaching all Christian truth through the Old Testament. . . . That the epistle was addressed to Palestine, or more specifically to Jerusalem, has been a prevalent opinion from the time of Clement of Alexandria, mainly because it was assumed that the word Hebrews must naturally mean Jews, whose mother-tongue was Aramaic. But the term had this restricted sense only when put in contrast to Hellenists. In itself, according to ordinary usage, it simply denotes Jews by race, and in Christian writings especially Jewish Christians. — *Smith*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xi, Art., "Hebrews, Epistle to the," p. 604b.

(3) *Evidence in the Epistle Concerning its Authorship.* — An examination of the epistle proves: (1) that it is not a translation. Not only are the citations of the Old Testament taken from the LXX., but its language is woven into the argument. There are also plays upon words and alliterations (5: 8; 9: 15-18; 10: 38, 39; 11: 37; 13: 14) impossible in a translation. The freedom of the style is also evidenced in the same direction. (2) The author was a Jew. He addresses Jewish readers as one of themselves. (3) He was, however, a Hellenist, a Jew in contact with Greek thought and using the LXX. (4) He was acquainted with the writings of Paul. (5) He was not an apostle, but one who had received his knowledge of the truth at second-hand (see 2: 3). Some of these characteristics oppose the Pauline authorship. Paul uses the Hebrew and not the Greek Bible; and his formulæ of citation are also different from those employed by this author. Paul never speaks of himself as receiving the gospel through the ministry of others. His epistles are never impersonal but always overflowing with personal feeling and abounding in personal references. But convincing as these features of the epistle are, it is the language and the thought which prove it un-Pauline. The language of Paul is rugged and disjointed and impetuous; while this epistle is distinguished by rhetorical skill, studied antithesis, even flow of faultless grammar, and measured march of rhythmical periods. — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 181, 182.

(4) *Conjectures Concerning the Authorship.* — But if not Paul, who wrote this remarkable letter? One who spoke of Timothy as brother (13: 23), as Paul spoke of him as son. One, therefore, of the younger companions of Paul. Luke, Clement, Titus, Silas, Barnabas, Apollos, Mark, have all been thought of. But in behalf of most of these names there is nothing positive to urge. The description of Apollos in Acts 18: 24, is decidedly in his favour; but the circumstance that so far as we know his labours were confined to the Greek cities on the Ægean sea presents a considerable difficulty. In favour of Barnabas' claim is the positive affirmation of Tertullian, and much that we know about him. But prob-

ably the only safe conclusion is that of Mr. Rendall: "I see little hope of our recovering now a name which was mere matter of conjecture in the second century." And in these circumstances Dr. Bruce's reflection may appear suitable, "It seems fitting that the author of an epistle which begins by virtually proclaiming God as the only speaker in Scripture, and Jesus Christ as the one speaker in the New Testament, should himself retire out of sight into the background." — *Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 183, 184.

(5) *Occasion of the Epistle*. — [The Hebrew Christians] whose acceptance of Christ had not shaken their sense of the continuity of the people of God and their Old Testament privileges, might readily retain the feeling that the ritual of the temple was still what it was of old — a visible and necessary pledge of God's approach to his people and his acceptance of their worship. So long as things ran their old course such a feeling would hardly affect the tenor of their Christian life. But when the death struggle of Judea against Rome drew the sympathy of every Hebrew heart, when the abomination of desolation stood in the holy place, when the holy and beautiful house was burned up with fire, and when, with all this, terror and distress filled the whole Roman empire and still the Lord delayed His coming, it was not strange that something like despair of God's help should assail our Hebrews, and that all the hopes of the people of God should seem threatened in the overthrow of the ancient pledge of Jehovah's nearness to Israel. . . .

If this be so it can hardly be questioned that the most natural view of the apostle's argument, as it comes to a point in such passages as 8: 13; 9: 9, is that the disappearance of the obsolete ritual of the old covenant is no blow to Christian faith, because in Christ ascended into glory the church possesses in heavenly verity all that the old ritual presented in mere earthly symbol. It was the ruin of the Jewish state and worship which compelled Christianity to find what is offered in our epistle — a theory of the disappearance of the old dispensation in the new. — *Smith*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xi, Art., "Hebrews, Epistle to the," p. 606.

§ 762. *The Argument in the Epistle to the Hebrews*. The writer begins with the statement of his thesis, that God has given to the world by His Son the complete and final revelation of His will. Christians were taunted by Jews as apostates from Jehovah and renegades from Moses, who had abandoned the Law which had been delivered by the mediation of Angels, and had proved faithless to the Aaronic priesthood; they were told that by accepting as their Messiah a crucified malefactor they had forfeited all the blessings and promises of the Old Covenant. It is the object of the writer, FIRST, to convince them, with many an interwoven warning, that, on the contrary, Christ, as the Son of God, is above *all* mediators and *all* priests, and the sole means of perfect and confident access for all men to the Holy Sanctuary of God's Presence. He therefore proves that Christ is ABOVE ANGELS, and that this supremacy was in no sense weakened by His earthly humiliation, which was the voluntary and predestined necessity whereby alone He could have effected His redeeming work; that He is ABOVE MOSES by His very nature; ABOVE JOSHUA, because He leads His people into their true and final rest; like Aaron in being called of God and in being able to sympathise with men, but ABOVE AARON, first because His Priesthood is eternal and not hereditary, and next because He is personally sinless, and thirdly because His Priesthood was established by an oath, and most of all because of the incomparable benefits resulting from it. He is only to be paralleled by the mysterious MELCHIZEDEK, the kingly Prince of Peace, anterior and superior to Aaron, springing from another tribe than that of Levi, and belonging to an earlier and loftier dispensation than that of Sinai. He is at once the

unchangeable Priest and the sinless sacrifice. And this change of Priesthood involves a change of the Law, and the introduction of a New Covenant, and an entrance into the true archetypal sanctuary which God made and not man.

Having thus in the first eight chapters shown the superiority of Christ to all those to whom was entrusted the dispensation of the Mosaic Covenant, he proceeds, **SECONDLY**, in the ninth and tenth chapters, to show the vast superiority of this New Covenant as the fulfilling of the shadowy types and symbols of the Mosaic Tabernacle, and as having rendered possible—not by the impotence of repeated animal sacrifices, but by the blood of Christ once offered—a perfect purification from sin. Under the New Covenant as under the Old there is sin and the need of expiation, and therefore in the New Covenant as in the Old there is a Temple, a Sacrifice, and a High Priest—only that these are not temporary, but eternal; not human, but Divine.—*Farrar*: *Early Days*, pp. 191, 192.

CHRIST SUPERIOR TO ANGELS.

§ 763. **The Opening and Foundation of the Argument.** The manner in which the writer here introduces his subject is not only full of majesty, but it also goes straight to the point. In a tone which reminds us of the Christology of the Epistles to the Colossians and Ephesians he sets forth the supreme exaltation of Christ as Light of (i.e., *from, ek*) Light and very God of very God—as the enthroned exalted Purifier from sin. He specifies particularly his superiority to ANGELS. The necessity for doing this points not so much to those seductive influences of Essene speculation against which St. Paul argues in his Epistle to the Colossians—for here there seems to be no danger of the *worship* of Angels—but rather to the Judaic boastings that their fiery Law was uttered by the mediation of Angels on Mount Sinai, and must therefore be superior to any teaching of man. The exaltation of Angels was, both at this period and long afterwards, a tendency of Jewish thought. . . .

It was necessary, therefore, to show that Christ was not a mere man whom it was idolatry to adore, but that he was above all the heavenly Principalities and Powers; and even more than this—that men themselves, by virtue of Christ's work, were more concerned than Angels in the æon of future glory. That Jesus was the Christ and the Son of God, he does not need to prove, because he is writing to those who had accepted Him as their Messiah; but it was necessary to show that this Messiah was Divine, and that even the angelic heralds of Sinai shrank into insignificance in comparison with His eternal and final work.—*Farrar*: *Early Days*, p. 194.

CHRIST'S PRIESTHOOD PERMANENT, AND HIS SACRIFICE COMPLETE.

§ 764. **Contrast between the First and the Last Sacrifice for Sin.** Christ entered the true holiest place by His own blood. He offered Himself. The High-priest is the sacrifice. Under the old covenant the victim must be "without spot." But the high-priest was not without blemish, and he offered for himself as well as for the errors of the people. But in the offering of Christ, the spotless purity of the Victim ensures that the High-priest Himself is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners. For this reason it is said (Heb. 9: 14) that He offered Himself "through an eternal spirit," or, as we should say in modern phrase, "through His eternal personality." He is the High-priest after the order of Melchizedek; and He invests the sacrifice with all the personal greatness of the High-priest. Is He "without beginning of days or end of life"? So also His sacrifice abides for ever. His power of an indissoluble life belongs to His atonement. Is He untouched by the rolling stream of time? His death was of

infinite merit in reference to the past and to the future, though it took place historically at the end of the ages. His eternal personality made it unnecessary for Him to suffer often since the foundation of the world. Because of His personal greatness, it sufficed that He should suffer once only and enter once into the holiest place. The eternal High-priest in one transitory act of death offered a sacrifice that remains eternally, and obtains for us an eternal redemption. . . .

The brute life, dragged to the altar, little knowing that its hot blood is to be a propitiation for human guilt, is contrasted with the blood of the Christ (for there is but one), Who, with the consciousness and strength of an eternal personality, willingly offers Himself as a sacrifice. Between these two lives are all the lives which God created, human and angelic. Yet the offering of a beast in some fashion and to some degree appeased conscience, unilluminated by the fierce light of God's holiness and untouched by the pathos of Christ's death. With this imperfect and negative peace, or, to speak more correctly, truce, of conscience is contrasted the living, eager worship of him whose enlightened conscience has been purified from spiritual defilement by the blood of Christ. Such a man's entire service is worship, and his worship is the ministering of a priest. He stands in the congregation of the righteous, and ascends unto God's holy hill. He enters the holiest place with Christ. He draws near with boldness to the mercy-seat, now the very throne itself of grace. — *Edwards*: Hebrews, pp. 156-158.

§ 765. *The Relation of Christ to Mosaic Ritualism.* [The method of argument in this epistle added] greatly to the inherent effectiveness of the line of controversy. It involved an Irony of the most finished kind, and in the original sense of the word. There was nothing biting and malicious in the irony, but it resembled the method often adopted by Socrates. Socrates was accustomed to put forward the argument of an opponent, to treat it with the profoundest deference, to discuss it with the most respectful seriousness, and all the while to rob it step by step of all its apparent validity, until it was left to collapse under the weight of inferences which it undeniably involved. In this Epistle, though with none of the dialectical devices of the great Athenian, we are led by a somewhat similar method to a very similar result. We see all the antiquity and glory of Mosaism. The Tabernacle rises before us in its splendour and beauty. We see the Ark and the Cherubim, and Aaron's rod that budded, and the golden pot of manna, and the wreaths of fragrant incense. We see the Levites in their white ephods busy with the sacrificial victims. We watch the High Priest as he passes with the blood of bulls and goats through the sanctuary into the Holiest Place. We see him come forth in his "golden apparel" and stand before the people with the jewelled Urim on his breast. And while the whole process of the solemn and gorgeous ritual is indicated with loving sympathy, suddenly, as with one wave of the wand, the Tabernacle, its Sacrifices, its Ritual, and its Priesthood seem to have been reduced to a shadow and a nullity, and we recognise the Lord Jesus Christ far above all Mediators and all Priests, and the sole means of perfect, confident, and universal access to the Inmost Sanctuary of God's Presence! We have, all the while, been led to recognise that, by faith in Christ, the Christian, not the Jew, stands forth as the true representative of the old traditions, the child of the glorious forefathers, the predestined heir of the Eternal Realities.

And thus the Epistle was equally effective both for Jews and Christians. The Jew, without one violent wrench of his prejudices, without one rude shock to his lifelong convictions, was drawn along gently, considerably, skilfully, as by a golden chain of fine rhetoric and irresistible reasoning, to see that the New Dispensation was but the glorious fulfilment, not the ruinous overthrow, of the Old; the Jewish Christian, so far from being robbed of a single privilege of Judaism, is taught that he may enjoy those privileges in their very richest significance. So

far from being compelled to abandon the viaticum of good examples which had been the glory of his nation's history, he may feed upon those examples with a deeper sympathy: and so far from losing his beneficial participation in Temples and Sacrifices, he is admitted by the blood of the only perfect Sacrifice into the inmost and the eternal Sanctuary of which the Temple of his nation was but a dim and perishable sign. — *Farrar*: In Cambridge Bible, Hebrews, pp. 19, 20.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 766. **The Qualifications of a Perfect Mediator.** A perfect mediator or high priest, between God and man must be both God and man. *God* — in order that he may be able to understand the recoil of an infinitely holy Being from sin and a race of sinners; *man* — in order that by putting himself in man's place he may experience alike the power of temptation and the weakness of human nature, and thus be able to sympathize fully with the sinner. Such a mediator is found in Jesus Christ, and aside from him there is and can be no other.

§ 767. **The Value of Sin-offerings.** The Old Testament sacrifices, though ordained of God, possessed no inherent efficacy. Since the life was supposed to be contained in the blood, the pouring out of the sacrificial blood was merely an expression of the sinner's consciousness that his own life was forfeited, and that it could be redeemed only by the substitution of an innocent life which in the eyes of a holy God would atone for, or "cover," the transgressor's guilt. This innocent blood was then temporarily accepted in place of the blood of that perfect Sacrifice which not only covers but cancels sin.

§ 768. **Human Priests and Sin-offerings no Longer Needed.** A priest is one who offers a sacrifice. But as Christ's sacrifice is forever complete, there is no further need of sacrifices, and hence no need of priests. The Christian minister, therefore, is only what the word implies, the servant of the church in spiritual things. The Roman Catholic church still calls its ministers "priests," because they claim, in the sacrament of the "mass," to offer up again the body and blood of Christ.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. CRITICAL AND HISTORICAL QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS: Ency. Brit., vol. xi, Art., "Hebrews, Epistle to the;" Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Hebrews, Epistle to the;" and Commentaries on the Epistle.
2. AUTHORSHIP AND STYLE OF THE EPISTLE: Cambridge Bible, Hebrews, Int., chs. 4, 6; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 15.
3. THEOLOGY OF THE EPISTLE: Cambridge Bible, Hebrews, Int., ch. 5; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 16.
4. THE NEW COVENANT: *Edwards*, The Epistle to the Hebrews, pp. 158-179.

Lesson 46. — THE LAST WORDS OF JOHN. Walking in Light and Abiding in Love.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 769. **Design of the Lesson.** To show as far as possible the time, place, and occasion of the three epistles of John, their leading ideas, and their relation to the time when they were written.

§ 770. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Note first of all what may be gathered from the scattered hints in the New Testament, and from tradition (in so far as this seems at all trustworthy) concerning the life of the apostle John from his last recorded appearance in Jerusalem until his death.

(2) Call attention to the probable date of these epistles, the place where they were written, the persons addressed, and the purposes for which they seem to have been produced.

(3) Describe the leading characteristics of the Cerinthian heresy, and point out expressions in the first epistle that seem to prove that the writer had this heresy in mind, and that it strongly colored his thought and language.

(4) Note the three fundamental ideas in the first epistle, two of which, light and love, are taken up in the lesson; show what John means by them, and how they are also the fundamental ideas in his gospel.

(5) Show, furthermore, how in John's thought walking in light and abiding in love are the essential characteristics of the new life of those who through faith in the incarnate Son of God have become children of the light and sons of God.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION TO 1, 2 and 3 John.

§ 771. **The Life of John from his Departure from Jerusalem to his Death.** The traditions of a later age come in, with more or less show of likelihood, to fill up the great gap which separates the Apostle of Jerusalem from the Bishop of Ephesus. It was a natural conjecture to suppose that he remained in Judæa till the death of the Virgin released him from his trust. When this took place we can only conjecture. There are no signs of his being at Jerusalem at the time of St. Paul's last visit (Acts, ch. 21). The Pastoral Epistles set aside the notion that he had come to Ephesus before the work of the Apostle of the Gentiles was brought to its conclusion. . . .

Assuming the authorship of the Epistles and the Revelation to be his, the facts which the N. T. writings assert or imply are — (1) that, having come to Ephesus, some persecution, local or general, drove him to Patmos (Rev. 1:9); (2) that the seven Churches, of which Asia was the centre, were special objects of his solicitude (Rev. 1:11); that in his work he had to encounter men who denied the truth on which his faith rested (1 Jo. 4:1; 2 Jo., vs. 7), and others who, with a railing and malignant temper, disputed his authority (3 Jo., vss. 9, 10). If to this we add that he must have outlived all, or nearly all, of those who had been the friends and companions even of his maturer years — that this lingering age gave strength to an old imagination that his Lord had promised him immortality (Jo. 21:23) . . . that from some who spoke with authority he received a solemn attestation of the confidence they reposed in him (Jo. 21:24) — we have stated all that has any claim to the character of historical truth. — *Plumptre*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "John, the Apostle," p. 1734.

§ 772. **The Epistles of St. John.** (1) *First John: To whom Written.* — Falling back on the general opinion, we believe the Epistle to have been written not to any one church, but to a cycle of churches, mainly consisting of Gentile converts. This last seems shewn by the warning of ch. 5:21, combined with the circumstance that so little reference is made to O. T. sayings or history.

It evidently also appears, that the Apostle is the spiritual teacher of those to whom he is writing. He knows their circumstances and various advances in the faith: the whole tone is that of a father in the faith. Such a relation, following as we surely must the traces furnished by ancient tradition, can only be found in the case of St. John, by believing the readers to have been members of the churches at and round Ephesus, where he lived and taught. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, 1 John, Prolegomena, p. 167.

(2) *Time and Place of Writing*. — There is a considerable diversity of opinion as to the time at which the Epistle was written. . . . [Certain critics] fix a date previous to the destruction of Jerusalem . . . [while others] assign it to the close of the first century. This is the more probable date. There are several indications of the Epistle being posterior to the Gospel. "The Epistles," says Westcott, "give later growths of common and characteristic ideas." Like the Gospel, it was probably written from Ephesus. . . . And this conclusion is strengthened by 4: 3, which condemns the heresy of Cerinthus, whose headquarters were Asia Minor. — *Meyrick*: In Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "John, St., The First Epistle General of."

(3) *Occasion*. — Mr. Browning has in his *Death in the Desert* caught the true occasion of the apostle's letter: it was written in view of the time when

"There is left on earth
No one alive who knew (consider this), —
Saw with his eyes and handled with his hands
That which was from the first, the Word of Life;
How will it be when none saith 'I saw'?"

It is the testimony of the last surviving eyewitness of the Lord, far removed from the scenes and words which he attests, giving, in view of rising error, — Gnostic and Docetic, — the apostolic judgment on questions of the day, and founding the truth of Christian doctrine on a recognition of the historical Christ. — *Carr*: In Ency. Brit., vol. xiii, Art., "John, the Apostle," p. 708.

(4) *Error Referred to in the Epistle*. — The author himself represents it as characteristic of his time that liars appeared who denied that Jesus is the Christ; and he attaches such significance to this phenomenon that he regards it as the fulfilment of the prophecy of Antichrist. . . . In the same way the antitheses in vs. 6 that these errorists denied the full incarnation of the eternal Son of God and hence the identity of the man Jesus with the heavenly Christ expressed in the author's view by the name "Jesus Christ," implies that they could at any rate admit that he came "by water," but not at all that he came "by blood." But this is nothing else than the teaching of Cerinthus according to which the heavenly æon Christ united at baptism with the man Jesus, but separated from him again before his death, which therefore does not at all amount to an actual incarnation and therewith to the perfect revelation of God in the historical life of Jesus. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 175, 176.

(5) *The Fundamental Idea in the Epistle*. — To assume that the appearance of these errors was the proper occasion of the Epistle . . . is at variance with its professed aim. The fundamental idea of the Epistle is, that the joy of the writer in his readers can only be complete, if the fellowship with God and Christ to which his preaching has led them, be proved in a Christian and moral life. . . .

The author knows how often the Christian is not what he ought to be; his whole Epistle has no other aim than to show that without practical attestation of a knowledge of God, of fellowship with Him and sonship to Him, all is self-deception and a lie. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 177, 185.

(6) *Purpose of Second John*.—Apparently John had visited this Church some time previously. . . . At any rate, either by personal observation or by trustworthy report, he had ascertained that a proportion of its members were adhering to the truth and living in its light. These he wishes to confirm, to warn against departure from the original and fundamental teaching of Christ. This he does because false teachers were going about, who did not confess “Christ coming in flesh,” that is to say, who denied the proper humanity of Christ, teaching some form of docetism. With such teachers there was to be no intercourse.—*Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 223, 224.

(7) *Purpose of Third John*.—John writes this letter to express his satisfaction at [the hospitality of Gaius] . . . and to beg that the kind offices of Gaius may be continued, as these Christian brethren were again setting out to evangelise. . . . He would naturally have sent this letter to the Church, but a former application of the same kind which he had made to the Church had been intercepted by Diotrephes, and its appeal not only refused with contempt, but threats of excommunication uttered against those who proposed to listen to it. . . . The letter gives a glimpse of the Christian Church in the closing years of the first century.—*Dods*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 224, 225.

WALKING IN THE LIGHT.

§ 773. **God is Light.** This is the substance of the “message.” But Christ did not say so, although He called Himself *the Light*, Jo. 12:12; 15:46; and speaks of *the children of the Light* (Jo. 8:36), even as James refers to the *Father of the Lights*, Jas. 1:17. But Christ, as the Son of God, is “the effulgence of his glory, and the very image of his substance” (Heb. 1:2), and this it is which John and his fellow Apostles (vs. 1) had heard, seen and gazed upon, so that the sum-total and centre of the message of Christ, as well as His personal manifestation and revelation in the flesh, may truly be expressed in the words “*God is Light*.”

Christ reveals this, but no philosopher is able to find it; without Christ the wise men of the world pass it by. It is not *a* light, as Luther translates, as if there were other lights beside and out of Him. The Being of God is Light. Neither is it *in the light*, as if it were only surrounding Him, nor *as the Light*. It is not “according to similitude,” but “according to substance.” Light is His garment (Ps., 104:2); Ezekiel (ch. 1) and Habakkuk (3:3, ff.) beheld the glory of the Lord as fire, pure and bright as lightning. He is not only the *Author of light*, to whom belongs His first creative *fiat* (Gen. 1:3), but the *Father of all light* (Jas. 1:17), a mighty sphere of light surrounds Him (1 Tim. 6:16); and the marvellous light wherein Christians walk is God’s (1 Pet. 2:9).—*Braune*: In Lange’s Commentary, 1 John, p. 29.

§ 774. **The Light, and the Walking in it.** [The statement that] “God is Light” is purely predicative, indicating the essence of God: just as when it is said in ch. 4:8, “God is love.” . . . [Light] unites in itself purity and clearness and beauty and glory, as no other material object does: it is the condition of all material life and growth and joy. And the application to God of such a predicative requires no transference. He is Light, and the Fountain of light material and light ethical. In the one world, darkness is the absence of light: in the other, darkness, untruthfulness, deceit, falsehood, is the absence of God. They who are in communion with God, and walk with God, are of the light, and walk in the light. . . .

Notice that this walking in the light, as He is in the light, is no mere imitation of God, . . . but is an identity in the essential element of our daily walk with the

essential element of God's eternal being: not imitation, but coincidence and identity of the very atmosphere of life. — *Alford*: Greek Testament, vol. iv, 1 John, pp. 426, 427.

ABIDING IN GOD THROUGH LOVE.

§ 775. **John's Doctrine of Love.** [In this epistle] the highest thing, to which the glance is directed, is rest in God who is fully revealed in Him [Christ] (1: 5) and intuitively apprehended (2: 4, 14) in His deepest essence, which consists in love (4: 8) and therefore draws us into this new life of love (4: 16). The dwelling and abiding of God in us corresponds to our dwelling and abiding in Him (3: 24; 4: 16), He gives us His spirit (3: 24; 4: 13), Himself working in us a new life; we are born of Him (4: 7; 5: 1), and may now be called His children; being of like nature with Him (3: 1, 10), we cannot do otherwise than love as He loves, the Father as well as the brethren (4: 19; 5: 1). — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, p. 185.

§ 776. **God is Love.** A sentence, which "is the summary and most simple expression of what the Scripture, the whole Scripture teaches throughout." . . . John treats in the most comprehensive manner, with perfect ease and certainty this most profound thought which would never have occurred to any thinker out of his own strength and reason! The heavens declare the glory and majesty of God only, (Ps., 19). His word alone declares His grace. In nature we meet His handiwork, His power and Wisdom, in His word alone do we encounter His Love and Mercy. The axioms "God is a Spirit" (Jo. 4: 24), and "God is Love" set forth the most vital truths concerning the Nature and Being of God. — "Spirit is His Nature, Love His Life," or Spirit is the Substance only in His attitude. — *Braune*: In Lange's Commentary, 1 John, p. 146.

§ 777. **Abiding in Divine Love through Brotherly Love.** — Brotherly love is and remains the measure of our life from God, from whom comes all love; he that abides in God, cannot be without love, and he that is without love cannot be in God, nor can God abide in him. He, who is Love, has thus ordained it Himself; it is His Will, His explicit commandment, even as it is in conformity with His Nature. — *Braune*: In Lange's Commentary, 1 John, p. 147.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 778. **The Purity that God Desires.** Since light is opposed to darkness it follows that God, who is light, that is, perfectly free from every suspicion of impurity, cannot tolerate darkness, or sin, in any of his creatures. Those who would please him must, like himself, be pure in every thought and action.

§ 779. **Light Loved by the Good, but Hated by the Evil.** Those who are pure in their lives not only do not fear to have their most secret thought and actions brought to the test of the light, but are anxious to do so, in order that all men may see that there is no evil way in them. Those on the contrary who are false or corrupt at heart, however fair they may seem externally, dread and hate the revealings of the light, because they do not want men to know what they really are.

§ 780. **The Light that Shines in the Heart.** Men may be able to shroud their inner lives in darkness from their fellow-men who can only discern the outward appearances, but not from God who shines into the innermost recesses of every soul. With him mere external virtue passes for nothing.

§ 781. **Being Like God in Love.** As children resemble their parents, so should those who are born of God resemble him. Especially, since love is the very essence of God's nature, should the children of God be those in whom love is the inspiring motive and ruling power of life. Only through love can we learn to know God.

§ 782. **The Love of God, the Basis of True Philanthropy.** The love of God forms the only secure basis of an intelligent and sympathetic love for our fellow-men. We shall love them, because he loves them; be patient with them, because he is longsuffering; seek by every means to benefit not only those who are kind to us, but those who revile and persecute us, because he lets his sun shine, his rain fall, and his innumerable blessings descend upon the evil and upon the good.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THE PICTURE OF JOHN AS PAINTED IN TRADITION: Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "John, the Apostle," pp. 1734, 1735. 2. THE CHARACTER OF JOHN AS PORTRAYED IN THE NEW TESTAMENT: Ibid., pp. 1735, 1736. 3. PARALLEL PASSAGES IN 1 JOHN AND THE GOSPEL OF JOHN: Lange's Commentary, 1 John, Int., pp. 8, 9. 4. RELATIONS AND CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE CHURCHES ADDRESSED IN 1 JOHN: Ibid., pp. 12, 13. 5. ANALYSIS OF THE CONTENTS OF 1 JOHN: Ency. Brit., vol. xiii, Art., "John, Epistles of," p. 708; *Farrar*, Early Days of Christianity, ch. 34. 6. "BY WATER AND BLOOD": Ibid., pp. 561-567.

Lesson 47.—THE CONDITION OF THE CHURCHES AS REFLECTED IN THE GOSPELS. The Relation of the Gospels to the Apostolic Age.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 783. **Design of the Lesson.** To show the conditions under which our present gospels were produced, the purposes for which they were written, and the extent to which they bear the impress of the age that gave them to the church.

§ 784. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Call attention to the uncertainty respecting the dates of these gospels, especially the first three, and the consequent difficulty of coördinating them with any definite events in a period that is in itself exceedingly obscure.

(2) Emphasize sharply the meaning of the term "gospel" in the first century, as distinguished from later usage; indicate how from the constant repetition of this "substance" (see § 785) of our Lord's life there sprang up an oral tradition, which in the course of time was committed to writing in a variety of forms, and that some such document now lost seems to have been the foundation, in part at least, of the first three, or synoptic gospels.

(3) Note the reasons that led to the production of our four gospels, and how these became established as authoritative, while all earlier attempts in the same direction perished.

(4) Call attention to what seems to be the underlying purpose of each of these gospels, and the relation of each to its time; especially to the fact that the most

important contribution which they furnish to the history of the last thirty years of the first century is the light they throw on the manner in which the churches were then apprehending the significance of Christ's person and work.

(5) Show, finally, that whatever may have been the external conditions that led to the composition of the four gospels, the aim of the writers was in no instance to serve literary or historical ends, but the practical needs of the church.

LIBRARY EXTRACTS.

PRELIMINARY.

§ 785. **Meaning of the Term "Gospel" in the First Century.** Till the end of the first century, and probably till the time of Justin Martyr, the 'Gospel' uniformly signifies the substance and not the record of the Life of Christ. The Evangelist was not the compiler of a history, but the missionary who carried the good-tidings to fresh countries; the bearer and not the author of the message. Timothy was charged to *fulfil the work of an Evangelist*; and Evangelists are enumerated by St. Paul with Apostles and Prophets and Teachers among the ministers of the Church. — *Westcott*: Introduction to the Gospels, p. 168.

§ 786. **How the Oral Gospel Grew up in Jerusalem.** Twelve men, who, during His public ministry, attended Him day and night on His journeys, whom He himself had called and trained for His witnesses, remained from thirty to forty years in Jerusalem at the head of the oldest Christian community; this community consisted for the most part of former disciples of Jesus, and counted among its members His nearest of kindred. In this circle began the appeal to the words of the Lord concerning the burning questions of the community's life, of the Kingdom of God and its duties, of His relation to the law and the authority of the Jewish people, of His second coming and the end of the world. The recollection of individual items supplemented and corrected each other. Also single incidents from His life were recalled, when He had spoken an especially significant word; this was not done for the purpose of relating in all details that which so many had heard and experienced, but to give these simple, golden words a frame and hang them in the halls of the community's memory. They came back repeatedly to these memoirs for edification. There was no interest taken in *completing* them, but in *inculcating* them as the unchangeable foundation of the life of the community. — *Weiss*: In Hartford Seminary Record, April, 1895.

§ 787. **Why the Written Gospels were Produced.** The demand for a written record of the life and doctrine of Jesus and his apostles arose from two causes; (1) the nature and fate of all oral tradition, which, as it spreads, continually gathers legendary additions and embellishments, till it becomes at last impossible to distinguish with certainty the original substance; (2) the danger of willful distortion, with which Judaizing and Gnostic errorists threatened the gospel even during the life-time of the apostles, as the warnings in the epistles of Paul and John and the many apocryphal gospels afterwards circulated abundantly prove. — *Schaff*: Apostolic Church, p. 591.

§ 788. **How our Four Gospels Came to be Received as Authoritative.** Acknowledging, then, that no Gospel earlier than the Canonical is now extant, we have to ask, Did the Church formally select our four from the mass of evangelical tradition; and was it in consequence of the pre-eminence given to these by the force of authority that the others then disappeared? Not so: it is a

remarkable fact that we have no early interference of Church authority in the making of a Canon; no Council discussed this subject; no formal decisions were made. The Canon seems to have shaped itself; . . . this non-interference of authority is a valuable topic of evidence to the genuineness of our Gospels; for it thus appears that it was owing to no adventitious authority, but by their own weight, that they crushed all rivals out of existence. Whence could they have had this weight except from its being known that the framers of these Gospels were men of superior authority to the others, or with access to fuller information. — *Salmon*: Introduction, New Test., pp. 108, 109.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MARK.

§ 789. The Oral Basis of Mark's Gospel: The Testimony of Papias. The earliest account of the origin of a 'Gospel' is that which Papias has given on the authority of the Elder John. Papias was himself a 'direct hearer' of this John, and John was a 'disciple of the Lord' (if the text of Papias be correct), or at any rate contemporary with the later period of the Apostolic age. 'This also the Elder used to say. Mark having become Peter's interpreter wrote accurately all that he remembered (*or* that he [Peter] mentioned); though he did not [record] in order that which was either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him; but subsequently, as I said, [attached himself to] Peter, who used to frame his teaching to meet the wants [of his hearers], but not as making a connected narrative of the Lord's discourses. So Mark committed no error, as he wrote down some particulars just as he recalled them to mind (*or* as he [Peter] narrated them). For he took heed to one thing, to omit none of the facts that he heard, and to make no false statement in [his account of] them.'

This most important testimony notices the three points on which stress has been already laid, the historic character of the oral Gospel, the special purpose with which it was framed, and the fragmentariness of its contents; and it was on such an oral basis that our present Gospel of St. Mark is said to have been founded, according to the evidence of one who must have known the Apostles. — *Westcott*: Introduction to the Gospels, pp. 180, 181.

§ 790. Papias's Testimony Confirmed by Internal Evidence. We are led, by internal evidence solely, to what Papias stated had been communicated to him as a tradition, viz. that Mark in his Gospel recorded things related by Peter; but we must add, not Mark alone, but Luke and Matthew also — only we may readily grant that it is Mark who tells the stories with such graphic fulness of detail as to give us most nearly the very words of the eyewitness. To this Renan bears testimony. He says: 'Mark is full of minute observations, which, without any doubt, come from an eyewitness. Nothing forbids us to think that this eyewitness, who evidently had followed Jesus, who had loved Him, and looked on Him very close at hand, and who had preserved a lively image of Him, was the Apostle Peter himself, as Papias would have us believe.' — *Salmon*: Introduction, New Test., p. 138.

§ 791. The Relation of Mark's Gospel to its Time. This Gospel is not by any means a purely historical work, but it is written with a religious object and adapted to the needs of the Church. Its didactic aim, however, has nothing to do with dogmatic questions or with the antitheses of the Apostolic age. The fact that the only long discourse which it gives is the one respecting the second coming, shows unanswerably that its chief aim was to strengthen hope in the second coming of Jesus . . . [at] a time when the declining hope of the second coming was in urgent need of reawakening on account of the apparent postpone-

ment of that event; and it became necessary to show how even in the facts of His earthly life, apart from His glorious return, Jesus had sufficiently attested the Messianic character of His mission. — *Weiss* : Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 245, 246, 262.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO MATTHEW.

§ 792. *The Origin of Matthew's Gospel.* It is not certain that we possess this Gospel in its original form. The testimony of the early Church is unanimous that Matthew wrote originally in the Hebrew language; and some confirmation is lent to this opinion by the fact that there are indications that he wrote his Gospel with special reference to exerting his influence upon the Jews, and from the statement of at least one of the fathers that he belonged to the Jewish party in the Christian Church. On the other hand, doubt is thrown over this opinion, both by an examination of the statements of the fathers, and by a consideration of peculiar forms of language employed in the Gospel itself. The question is unsettled, the best scholars not agreeing in their judgment concerning it. If there was a Hebrew original, it disappeared at a very early age. The Greek Gospel which we now possess was, it is almost certain, written in Matthew's lifetime, and it is not at all improbable that he wrote the Gospel in both the Greek and Hebrew languages. — *Abbott* : Commentary, Matthew, Int., p. 49.

§ 793. *The Relation of Matthew's Gospel to its Time.* The Gospel is not written for the purpose of taking part in current disputed questions, but is meant to explain how the sending of the Messiah who was destined to be the king of Israel and called to re-establish the Messianic kingdom in Israel, fulfilling its law and promise, had nevertheless led to the gathering of a Messianic Church essentially composed of Gentiles, living solely in accordance with the commands of their exalted Lord and yet appearing as heirs of the prerogative of Israel. — *Weiss* : Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, p. 285.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO LUKE.

§ 794. *The Origin of Luke's Gospel, as Stated in the Prologue.* Apart from tradition, the preface with which St. Luke opens his Gospel throws a striking light upon its composition. The words have been made the subject of the most varied controversy, though the true sense seems to lie upon their surface. Both in the description which he gives of other 'Gospels,' and in the peculiar character which he claims for his own, St. Luke appears to confirm the views already given of the prevalence and nature of the unwritten Gospel of the first age. The common basis of the Evangelic narratives is said to be the oral *tradition of those who from the beginning* (cf. Acts 1 : 21, 22) *were eye-witnesses and ministers of the word.*

The two elements in the Apostolic character which have been already pointed out, personal knowledge and practical experience, are recognized by St. Luke as present in those who originally *handed down* the history which many attempted to draw up and arrange afresh in a connected shape. The work of these unknown first Evangelists was new only in form and not in substance. The tradition which they incorporated in a narrative was not peculiar to themselves, but was common to all; for the common belief was independent of these written records. St. Luke speaks of the 'attempts' as of something which had no influence at the present. *The facts had been fully believed* apart from the evidence of such documents. Theophilus was already *instructed in the words* of the exact truth of which St. Luke wished to assure him; and his instruction was derived not from books, but from that oral teaching which is described by the same term from the first foundation of the Church (Acts 18 : 25; 1 Cor. 15 : 19; Gal. 6 : 6).

So far then the statements of St. Luke corroborate in the fullest manner the view which has been taken of the origin of written Gospels. The narrative was the embodiment of the oral accounts: the *facts* were co-ordinate with *the word*: the work of the Evangelist was arrangement rather than fresh composition: the subjects with which he dealt were at once matters of firm conviction and ordinary instruction. The grounds on which St. Luke rests his own narrative involve the same principles. It is evident at first that he represents his Gospel as a faithful embodiment of the 'Evangelic tradition.' He finds no fault with the basis on which the earlier writers rested. His own determination is placed on an equal footing with theirs; but he claims for himself a knowledge of the Apostolic preaching continuous from the first, complete, exact; and for his writing a due order. — *Westcott*: Introduction to the Gospels, pp. 185-187.

§ 795. **The Pauline Character of Luke's Gospel.** It is not strange that some of the Fathers, as was said, suspected that the apostle referred to Luke's writing, when he said "my gospel." The character and training of Luke led him, in providing for the satisfaction of the inquiries of Theophilus, to produce just such an account of Jesus Christ as is pre-supposed in all the Pauline doctrine of salvation. The indispensableness to all men of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus; the provision of salvation for all; and the free offer of it to all, — appear as distinctly in our Gospel as in the Epistle to the Romans. It is not, as has been sometimes represented, a Gospel specifically adapted to the Gentiles . . . still less, perhaps, is it for the Jews, although dwelling much on the teachings and institutions of the Old Testament. It refers to "the law" more frequently than Matthew; Mark does not once name it. Particular expressions in unusual number might suit the views of a Gentile, but others would please a Jew, even a Pharisee. As a whole, the writing was for neither, but for both. It was for and against Jew; for and against Gentile; because it was for the human race. — *Bliss*: In American Commentary, Luke, Int., p. 13.

THE GOSPEL ACCORDING TO JOHN.

§ 796. **The Fourth Gospel, and the Final Break of Christianity with Judaism.** Finally comes the time when the Christian church breaks the last bond which unites her to her Jewish-Christian past. The temple has lain for a decade in wreck and ruin; the people who had deliberately rejected the Messiah stand as the representatives of unbelief and hostility to Christ in universal history. The last of the Apostles live in Ephesus where he comes into the inheritance of the great Apostle to the Gentiles. The earthly life of the Lord, which he had witnessed, seems to him only the beginning of the terrible contest which the darkness of this world has waged and is waging against the light.

As the history of this contest, in which the light comes off victor in spite of seeming defeat, John writes his Gospel, which first gives us an insight into the very inner movement of this universal tragedy. He supposes the other Gospels as known, — ratifying, enlarging, and where it is necessary, correcting them. The hoary Apostle recalls details in manifold form. His Gospel has already utterly stripped off the garment of contemporary life in which the figure of Christ moves in the Synoptics. John has raised his history out of the narrow, national grounds in which it rooted, and shows us the form of the World-Saviour as He moves through the history of the church. This Saviour dispenses the satisfying water of life to thirsty humanity, gives the light of the perfect divine revelation to those who are struggling in darkness for the final solution of all problems, and to those made prisoner by death He grants immortal life.

Only the Beloved Disciple himself, who had lain on the Master's breast and seen most deeply into His heart, could write His history as the record of his

transfiguration, as the revelation of the Word become flesh which was in the beginning; but John could witness out of his inmost experience how, in this history, the Eternal and Imperishable had entered into this perishable world, opening for it the way out of the bondage of sin and death into life and salvation. — *Weiss*: In Hartford Seminary Record, April, 1895.

§ 797. **The Relation of John's Gospel to the Cerinthian Heresy.** That the fourth Gospel does not properly aim at historiography, appears from the circumstance that it assumes a knowledge on the part of the readers of the Evangelical history in general, as well as of many individual details. . . . The object of his [John's] choice of narratives is the confirmation of faith in the Messiahship of Jesus in his sense, *i. e.* in His eternal Sonship to God, which leads to perfect blessedness. This doctrinal aim certainly implies that he believed faith in the Son of God or the incarnate Logos to be endangered or needing confirmation in his circle; and the Epistle so closely connected with the Gospel shows that it was Cerinthian Gnosis to which this was due. . . . The danger threatening the true faith in emerging Gnosis can alone have been the occasion which prompted him in presenting and illustrating the leading particulars in the life of Jesus, to make his own testimony as an eye-witness the basis of proof that the Divine glory of the incarnate Logos had appeared in Christ, and in victorious struggle with the unbelieving world had brought the highest blessedness to all believers. — *Weiss*: Introduction, New Test., vol. ii, pp. 376-378.

SUMMARY.

§ 798. **The Gospels Written, not for Literary, but Practical Ends.** [Some have] considered the Gospels as if they were dry chronicles, where each writer expressed whatever he knew or could learn of the life of Jesus. But they are not this at all. Our Gospel of Matthew shows, by its references to the Old Testament, how it will strengthen the faith in Jewish-Christian circles that Jesus is the Messiah promised by the prophets. Luke, according to his preface to Theophilus, proposes to narrate only the things which he has found out, in order to confirm the teaching which Theophilus had received from Paul. John says absolutely without ambiguity that he is bearing witness to the divine majesty of the Eternal Word become flesh, which he had seen in Christ, in order to lead men to the faith that this Jesus is the Eternal Son of God in whom men have everlasting life. Of Mark alone can it be said, perhaps, that he narrated for the pure purpose of narration, that he took pleasure in the description of single events as such; yet his Gospel is surely written for the purpose of edification and teaching, although not for historical ends. . . .

The Gospels . . . show us how the Apostles apprehended these facts [the deeds and words of Jesus] in faith and attested their truth for the foundation and increase of the faith of the churches. — *Weiss*: In Hartford Seminary Record, April, 1895.

PRACTICAL SUGGESTIONS.

§ 799. **The Gospels the Source of our Knowledge of Christ.** The only reliable knowledge which the world possesses of the historical Christ is derived from his immediate disciples, or from those who obtained their information from them. Christ neither wrote down his teachings himself, nor apparently took any ordinary means to have them committed to writing. It is highly improbable that any notes were taken by those who heard them. However they have been preserved, the world is convinced that in our four gospels we possess a truthful record of the work and words of our Lord. This follows from the absolute impos-

sibility of accounting for such a life as they describe, or for such teachings as they impart, on the ground of literary invention. To create such a life from pure imagination would require not one author, but four, each equal, if not superior, to the ideal which he has imagined.

§ 800. **The Growing Estimate of Christ through the Ages.** The gospels show what a colossal estimate of Jesus Christ as the divine Son of God, the Saviour of the world, had already been attained in the primitive church. This conception of the person and work of Christ instead of losing its sharpness in the lengthening vistas of time, or diminishing in force and influence under the assaults of an unsparing criticism, has grown in magnitude and intensity with every passing century, until more and more it is coming to be the dominant power in the history of humanity.

ADDITIONAL TOPICS, WITH LIBRARY REFERENCES.

1. THEORIES AS TO THE ORIGIN OF THE GOSPELS: *Salmon*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 115-151; Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Gospels," pp. 1217-1229; Ency. Brit., vol. x, Art., "Gospels," pp. 789-812; *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. i, Prolegomena, pp. 6-12. 2. DATES ASSIGNED TO THE GOSPELS IN THEIR PRESENT FORM: Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Gospels," p. 1241; Ency. Brit., vol. x, Art., "Gospels," pp. 812, 813. 3. APOCRYPHAL AND HERETICAL GOSPELS: *Salmon*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 175-190. 4. THE PROCESS BY WHICH THE GOSPELS BECAME CANONICAL: Smith's Dict. Bib., New Ed., Art., "Gospels," pp. 1238-1240. 5. THE ORIGINAL LANGUAGE OF MATTHEW'S GOSPEL: *Salmon*, Introduction, New Test., pp. 152-174; *Alford*, Greek Testament, vol. i, Prolegomena, pp. 25-29. 6. INSPIRATION OF THE EVANGELISTS: *Ibid.*, pp. 15-21.

Lesson 48. — REVIEW OF PART V: LESSONS 42-47; and a General Review of the Course.

EDITORIAL NOTES.

§ 801. **Design of the Lesson.** Read carefully what is said in § 247, Lesson 13, regarding the design of a review. The statements made there apply with equal force to this lesson.

§ 802. **Preparing and Teaching the Lesson.** (1) Read also § 248, Lesson 13, and apply the same to this lesson.

(2) Let the teacher consider what is said in Note 101, Progressive grade, or Note 219, Intermediate grade, and decide whether one or two Sundays shall be given to this review.

(3) Request the class to be prepared to state the contents of the Introductory Note to Part V in the Lessons (see Lesson 42), and also of the Introductory Note to this Lesson. The former gives the leading characteristics of the Period included in Part V, while the latter gives a summary of its entire history, all of which should be carefully studied.

(4) If necessary, apportion these notes among the scholars to state their contents, and ask the class to make any additions that may be necessary to bring out all the facts referred to. Either by such statements, or by questions and answers, bring clearly before the class a general survey of the ground covered in Part V,

(5) If the class or school is provided with a large map of Asia Minor, let some pupil point out the location of the Roman provinces mentioned in 1 Pet. 1:1, and the location of the seven churches addressed in Rev., chs. 2, 3.

§ 803. Important Points to be Aimed at in the Review of Part V. (1) Make it a rapid survey of the entire period covered in Lessons 42-47. Call especial attention to the fact that our knowledge of this period is exceedingly meager.

(2) The reasons for the obscurity that covers this period are three: (a) the lack of a trustworthy historical guide such as Luke gives in the Acts; (b) the lack of historical references in the general epistles that date from this period, so unlike in this respect the epistles of Paul; and (c) the almost total silence of secular history concerning a movement which had not yet emerged into sufficient prominence to win more than a passing remark.

(3) Show that the knowledge we possess of this period rests almost wholly on indirect evidence, difficult to formulate, and often still more difficult to interpret with confidence.

(4) Observe that, notwithstanding this general obscurity, some hints concerning the condition of the churches may be gathered from the epistles of Peter, Jude, and John, and from the second and third chapters of the Revelation; from these sources we see that trials were experienced from persecutions and from errors both within and without the churches.

(5) Show that the synoptic gospels, in so far as they shed any light on the period in which they were written, indicate that the churches in general had reached the same conception of the universal mission of Christianity which was so conspicuously emphasized in the teachings of Paul; and that the fourth gospel proves that by the end of the first century Christianity had completely broken with Judaism and was fully apprehending its lofty spiritual relations as a revelation of and from the incarnate Son of God.

§ 804. The General Review of the Course. (1) If a separate Sunday is given to this portion of the review, which is most desirable, aim to bring out only the salient features of the history.

(2) Run through the questions as rapidly as possible, omitting 17 for special notice as indicated in (5) below.

(3) A large map would be a great assistance in tracing the journeys of Paul from place to place in answer to the questions on Part III.

(4) After the survey of the history has been made call attention to a few of the evidences of divine power and guidance revealed in the history, and from these suggest encouragement and inspiration for our own times.

(5) Request each member of the class to prepare and bring in a list of the books of the New Testament, as suggested in question 17. Differences of arrangement in these lists may then be noted and discussed as far as the remaining time permits,

FULL LIST OF BOOKS REFERRED TO.

- ABBOTT**, Commentaries. Matthew. 1875. The Acts. 1878. Romans. 1888. New York: A. S. Barnes & Co.
- ALFORD**, The Greek Testament. 4 vols. New Ed. Boston: Lee & Shepard. 1877.
- AMERICAN COMMENTARY ON THE NEW TEST.**, the Gospel of Luke. Philadelphia: Am. Baptist Pub. Soc. 1884.
- ANTE-NICENE FATHERS**. Am. Ed. Buffalo: Christian Literature Pub. Co.
- BEET**, A Commentary on St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians. 3d Ed. London: Hodder & Stoughton. 1885.
- BERNARD**, The Progress of Doctrine. 4th Ed. London: Macmillan & Co. 1879.
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